FREEDOM FIGHTER

F.Z.KITCHLEW

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On April 13th, 1979 it will be sixty years since the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. Yet many aspects of this dark chapter in human history remain shrouded in mystery. Here for the first time is revealed the truth about Jallianwala Bagh, in shocking and gory detail.

This is the story of the man who became immortal as a result of Jallianwala Bagh. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew spent more time in British jails than either Gandhi or Nehru. He was undeniably India's greatest freedom fighter and here emerges as one of the greatest the world has ever known. Sixty years after Jallianwala Bagh his courage and vision stand completely vindicated.

ISBN 0 86116 126 2

£4.50

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Freedom Fighter–
The Story Of Dr.Saifuddin Kitchlew

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NEW HORIZON

ISBN 0 86116 126 2

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Printed & Published by
New Horizon
5 Victoria Drive
Bognor Regis, W. Sussex

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew
Freedom Fighter
By Farooq Z. Kitchlew

Foreword

When Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew died on October 9, 1963, he joined the company of immortals. For nearly four decades he had devoted himself to the cause of his country's freedom and followed it up with a stint for world peace. This Book is an attempt to assess the years of his struggle to achieve freedom for India and later years when he strode the International stage.

I would like to express my grateful thanks to Professor Roger Lovat of Peterhouse, Cambridge; Miss Barbara Bates, Student's Administrator, The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, Mr. Fazal Ahmad Karim Fazli, C.S.P.; Khwaja Rauf - Kitchlew; Mr. K.G. Hirst, and Mr. Rashid Zakaria Kitchlew, all of whom helped me in compiling this Book.

Farooq Z. Kitchlew.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Popularly known as Shahinshah-e-Siyasat (King of Politics) among his followers, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was born at Amritsar (Punjab) on 5th January 1888, a little over two years after the Indian National Congress was founded.

He came of a distinguished Kashmiri family which had migrated during the 18th century to the 'land of five rivers'. Brought up with the leisure and learning typical of the aristocracy of those days, in the secure atmosphere of the Edwardian Age, his educational career was shaped by private tutors, Cambridge and then Berlin University. When he was drawn to the political arena soon after his return to India, his path was lighted by the guidance of Maulana Mohammad Ali and he soon rose to the front rank of political leadership. Kitchlew started taking part in the social and political activities of the Amritsar town and was rewarded with the chair of the Municipal Commissioner of Amritsar. From this time on he kept on moving in the political field and came to be recognized as one of those who paved the way for the congress in the province of the Punjab.

Kitchlew was not only a popular Leader but also a powerful Barrister. He took keen interest in his legal profession and achieved early prominence by conducting the cases of the Maharajah of Baroda; the very handsome amount which Kitchlew received as his fee, he donated to charity. Barristers and lawyers such as Sir Tej Bhadur Sapru, Asaf Ali, Sir Mohammad Zafarullah Khan, and others were astonished at Kitchlew's brilliance and the way he conducted the cases. Subsequently the Maharajah retained Kitchlew as his Senior Adviser.

Kitchlew was the most complete expression of a whole class the young westernized intelligentsia which emerged after the first world war. Indian by birth, yet western by education; modern in outlook, yet influenced by the heritage of his native land, a staunch patriot, yet a man with international vision, he was the symbol of a new society, liberal, humanist and egalitarian. Indeed, Kitchlew was the embodiment of an intelligentsia constantly in turmoil as it sought to reconcile its goals with the alien environment in which it grew to maturity. For many years Kitchlew was an acknowledged hero of the people of north west India. This alone endowed him with enormous prestige. He had, too, the reputation of being an

indomitable fighter for freedom who had sacrificed wealth and leisure in the struggle for Independence.

Under the magic spell of his Leadership a demoralized, backward and broken people suddenly straightened their backs and lifted their heads and took part in disciplined, joint action on a countrywide scale. The way Kitchlew pointed out was hard and difficult, but it was a brave path and it seemed to lead to the promised land of freedom. Because of that promise the people marched ahead.

Kitchlew's main activity in his early years of public life was emancipation of Muslims and their holy places, and with this object he undertook extensive tours all over India. He took each province by turn and visited every district and almost every town as well as remote rural areas. Everywhere he attracted enormous crowds. In this manner he repeatedly toured India and came to know every bit of the vast country.

Kitchlew spent 17 years in jail for his activities in the struggle for freedom of India, which eventually came in 1947 when he was nearly sixty. He did not like the idea of partition which accompanied the country's independence, he foresaw that it would be disastrous to India's economy and also would create serious communal trouble throughout the sub-continent. Kitchlew worked hard to mobilize the Muslim public opinion in favour of one India with the maximum Muslim interests as their goal.

Saifuddin Kitchlew who fought for freedom was a brave and steadfast captain; became very much disappointed due to the Congress and the Muslim League's acceptance of the partition of India. He did not leave the Congress but remained aloof and silent for a few years, finally veering round to the World Peace Movement. He became chairman of the All India Peace Council in early 1950 and remained in office for a number of years. Kitchlew made an extensive tour of Eastern Europe and was invited by Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia to a 'Peace Summit' as it was described. Kitchlew died in the cause of freedom and World Peace to which he had always been devoted and for which he had worked unceasingly. He died suddenly as all men wish to die. There was no fading away of the body or forgetfulness of the mind that comes with age.

Kitchlew showed the way to freedom and truth. Throughout his life he thought of India in terms of the poor and the oppressed and the down-trodden. To raise them and free them was the mission of his life. He adopted their ways of life and dress so that none would feel lowly. As Dr. Sarvepalli - Radha Krishnan remarked, "Kitchlew was a valiant servant of

India's freedom and a great personality." Kitchlew was a symbol of Asia's political awakening and the outstanding spokesman of the 'middleway' in the world of ideological crusades. Friends and foes recognized him as a leading actor on the stage of contemporary history. All who knew him admired his devotion to the cause of Indian freedom and world peace.

CHAPTER 2

ANCESTRY AND CHILDHOOD

In the heart of the Himalayas lies the lovely vale of Kashmir, for centuries a repository of culture and cradle of many families who made their mark in the national life of India. Hindu and Buddhist monarchs ruled the land until 1294 when it passed into Muslim hands. Akbar, the great Moghul, incorporated Kashmir into his domain in 1588. Akbar's favourite son and successor Jehangir was drawn strongly towards the valleys and streams with the majestic background of mountains and glaciers. For months together, his court sojourned in and around Srinagar and became the hub of all business and cultural activity. The Kitchlews were a family of businessmen and Government servants who throve in this affluent and cultural atmosphere. Their fortunes rose and fell with those of the Moghul Court during the fateful seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Shawls woven from the soft fluffy ' underneath wool' of the mountain goats was the main business of the family. These shawls became so famous that women the world over longed for a Kashmiri shawl, especially one fine enough to be drawn through the circle of a wedding ring.

In the middle of the 18th century, Khwaja Azizuddin - Kitchlew was selling high quality Kashmiri embroidered shawls throughout north west India. When the family moved down from Kashmir into the flourishing trade centre of Punjab at Amritsar, Azizuddin chanced to become acquainted with some of the leading business magnates in the southern state of Hyderabad; his business perked up and he earned vast amounts of money by supplying the most valuable and beautiful shawls and other fabulous Kashmiri handicrafts in the state of Hyderabad. Within a few years he established good connections in other states as well. He soon became acquainted with the family of the ruler, His Exalted Highness the Nizam and earned vast sums of money by supplying Kashmiri goods and shawls of high class to the family of the Nizam. He achieved even greater fame in his trade and was sent for by the Maharajah of Jodhpur also who had a great love for Kashmiri shawls and other artistic material.

His eldest son Jalaluddin soon became intimately associated with this trade and followed in his father's footsteps all over India. It was at Amritsar that Saifuddin, the fourth son and fifth child of Azizuddin was born on 5th January 1888.

The Kitchlews, like most families in India at that time, lived under the 'joint family' system, with all branches of the patrilineal family living under the same roof. A son, when he married, brought his wife to his father's house; a daughter went to the home of her husband. After the death of the father, the eldest son took his place as head of the household and was responsible for the family until the other members were able to support themselves or contribute to the joint income. The matriarch looked after the household, her authority accepted and her sway unchallenged by her daughters-in-law. When she died, the wife of the eldest son assumed her responsibilities.

In the joint family, aunts and uncles received the same affection and respect as children gave to their parents. Usually there were several cousins about the same age in the household, so boys and girls did not need to leave home to find playmates. Even a second or third cousin was thought of as brother or sister and often referred to as such. They learned much of each other and had a solid background of home life for there was a close relationship between the older and the younger generation.

The joint family house of the Kitchlews in Katra Sufaid (White Quadrangle) near Gali Dhobian (Washermen's Street) in the Lahori Gate area at Amritsar was known to neighbours as the 'Bara Ghar (Big House). It was a five storeyed affair and dominated the family life for several decades.

The most important room was naturally the one where all the family gathered to talk, to read and to eat. Here one usually sat on the floor with rugs and cushions for comfort. In the hot season, these were replaced by airy matting. Food was usually served to each person on a thali, a large plate often made of silver. Rice was piled up in the middle of the thali, around which were placed small bowls in which vegetables, meat or other food was served.

Saifuddin's own room was of no special interest to him as he grew up; it was only a place to sleep. The common gathering room meant most to all of them, for it was here that things happened. It was the centre of the life of the family. 'Bara Ghar' was famous for its family gatherings. People were always coming and going during the day for business and in the evening to talk politics and discuss affairs of the world.

Azizuddin was already in Hyderabad doing business with the family of the Nizam. He supported Saifuddin throughout his educational career but could not pay personal attention to his son due to the business commitment in Hyderabad. Thus

Saifuddin was well looked after by his three elder brothers. The eldest Jalal had a major hand in his upbringing. The second brother Obaidullah had an uneventful life, but the third brother Ibrahim, who was in the medical profession, died at a young age, leaving four children. His death was a great shock to Saifuddin who had grown up under Ibrahim's affectionate care.

Jalaluddin, the head of the family, was a hard-working business-man of considerable repute. He bought and sold Kashmiri shawls and other woollen goods to the Nawabs and princely families of Punjab states and earned vast sums of money.

Inside the house, their mother Janmali, a woman of impressive personality and tremendous will, much of whose strong-mindedness Saifuddin Kitchlew inherited, looked after the domestic details and his brother's children. Kitchlew's mother Janmali was a capable woman. But her chief interest was in the house. When there was sickness in the family she wore herself out in days and nights of nursing. She had little of the weakness, common to women of her age and class, for finery or jewellery. She was not versed in the scriptures. Except for a smattering of Urdu, she was practically unlettered; her knowledge of religion was acquired at home or from discourses heard at religious gatherings. She was orthodox, even superstitious. She would not let the children touch an 'untouchable' or look at the lunar eclipse. Kitchlew was more curious than the other children and asked searching questions. How did contact with Babu, the household sweeper, contaminate? How could the eclipse harm the onlooker? Her explanation did not always carry conviction. But for all the scepticism he was bound to her by bonds the strength of which he felt throughout his life. Kitchlew's warmest affection went to his mother Janmali. He sometimes feared his father but he loved his mother and always remembered her 'saintliness' and her deeply religious nature. She never ate a meal without prayer. As a boy Kitchlew amused himself with rubber balloons and revolving tops. He played 'Guli Danda', a game encountered in many widely separated countries which consists in striking a short sharpened, wooden peg with a long stick. 'Peggy' or 'Pussey' some call it. Kitchlew's mother Janmali died in Amritsar after a brief illness. Her death was a great personal shock to Saifuddin Kitchlew.

Kitchlew started school in Amritsar. He encountered more difficulty in mastering the multiplication table than in learning naughty names of the teacher. His attendance in the

school was quite punctual. His sister Amir Begum recalled that rather than be late he would eat the food of the previous day if breakfast was not ready. He preferred walking to going to school by carriage. "My books and lessons were my sole companions," Kitchlew told one of his friends. At the end of the school day he ran home. He could not bear to talk to anybody.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATION AND MARRIAGE

Saifuddin Kitchlew's father was opposed to the education of his children in the company of the plebeians at the government run schools. He thought it more appropriate for his children to have lessons in the solitary grandeur of the family mansion with a respectable special tutor. From the pre-school age until Saif left for England at the age of 19, he was trained first at home and later at M.A.O. High School Amritsar and at Aligarh and Agra colleges. His education was particularly in Indian languages and Arabic. Learned Maulvis (Scholars in Arabic) were assigned to teach him the Holy Qurân. But there was little of interest in the life of the growing child. The house was full of people but even the youngest of his cousins were considerably older than him. He felt left out of their games with no companions of his own age, he sought instinctively the company of his sister Amir-Begum, till she was married off in 1894 to a well known lawyer, Mian Azizullah Minto of Rawalpindi. Thereafter for several years, Rawalpindi remained the focus of his sentimental life, through the period of adolescence and a bit later.

Saifuddin adopted Urdu while under training at Aligarh and Agra. When he came home from Aligarh for summer vacations for the first time it appeared as if he had altogether forgotten Punjabi.

The family often took long holidays in the ancestral valley of Kashmir. With several friends the family used to leave Amritsar by train for the terminus at Rawalpindi. They had to alight at Rawalpindi to continue the journey into the valley by car. Often on these journeys Saifuddin noticed that special railway compartments were reserved for Europeans and, however crowded the train might be, no Indian was allowed to travel in them, even when they were empty. Even an unreserved compartment would be taken possession of by an English man and he would not allow any Indian to enter it. Benches and chairs were also reserved for Europeans in public parks and other places.

The young boy listened to the grown-up talk of his cousins, not always understanding all of it. They talked of the overbearing character and insulting manners of the English people toward Indians, and how it was the duty of every Indian to stand up to this and not to tolerate it. Instances of conflicts between the rulers and the ruled were common and

were fully discussed. Not infrequently one of his cousins or one of his friends became personally involved in the encounters and then, of course, Kitchlew got very excited over it. One of the cousins was the strong man of the family and he loved to pick a quarrel with an Englishman or more frequently with Eurasians, who perhaps to show off their connection with the ruling race were often even more offensive than the English official or merchant. Such quarrels took place especially during railway journeys. Little Saif grew up to resent the presence and behaviour of the alien rulers, and whenever an Indian hit back Saif felt elated. Occasional journeys to distant towns for marriages in the family were times of excitement, opportunities to enjoy freedom from the normal routine. He developed a sound taste for serious reading which he retained throughout his life. As a teenager Kitchlew derived much pleasure from the Kipling stories and the more serious life adventures of the great explorers at the turn of the century.

Kitchlew's leisure hours were whiled away in a variety of activities, swimming, cricket, tennis and riding. There were, too, visits to mosques and the many Muslim festivals which provided much enjoyment but to which he attached more social than religious significance.

Stepping out of his 'teenage' Saifuddin went to England in August 1907 and entered Peterhouse, Cambridge, on 5th October 1907, on the recommendation of Professor F.C. Jones, Principal of Agra College. He remained in residence until the summer of 1910, passing Law special I and Law special II, followed by History special I and History special II. He took his B.A. degree early in 1911, at the age of 24. In 1913, Kitchlew obtained a doctorate in Philosophy from Munster University, Berlin and returned to India.

The Indian students at Cambridge had formed a society called the 'Majlis'. Kitchlew was an active member of the society during his stay at Cambridge. In the Majlis and private talks the Indian students often used the most extreme language when discussing Indian politics. They even talked in admiration of acts of revolutionary violence. It was at Cambridge, that broadly speaking certain socialistic ideas of Kitchlew were developed. Kitchlew was also influenced by the story of the building up of the Italian Republic by Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi and by the contemporary Irish struggle. Kitchlew had always been fascinated by the French Revolution. He read books on that theme, which excited in him a kind of admiration for nationalism and freedom movements.

This was the time when the awful spectre of a world war was still remote, when England basked in the glory of the Edwardian era, when the Empire was firmly established in the far flung corners of the earth, and when the first stirrings of serious nationalist agitation were causing storms in India. He remained at Cambridge for a few years in the peaceful, stimulating atmosphere of one of the world's greatest centres of learning. These were years of mental growth, of comfort and pleasant living. Peterhouse was then famous, among other things, as the training ground of statesmen. His formal studies were in Law and History but George Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell stimulated his thought.

In a brief interlude Saifuddin went down to London to read for the Bar, eating his dinners at the Lincoln's Inn and passing his examinations. He was called to the Bar on the 24th January, 1911. During this short stay in London, Kitchlew lived a life of an English gentleman, applying his philosophy of Cambridge days to the full. He was a very handsome and well built young man with black hair, debonair in his Bond Street clothes. He frequented the proper clubs and restaurants, whiled away his time at the theatre and social functions of the young aristocrats.

Lord Sinha, an Indian, recalled meeting Kitchlew in January 1909, in Piccadilly Circus. Kitchlew, he said, was wearing at the time a high silk top hat, burnished bright, a stiff collar, a rather flashy tie displaying all the colours of the rainbow, under which there was a fine striped shirt. He was also wearing a monocle. He wore as his outer clothes a morning coat, a double-breasted waistcoat, and dark striped trousers to match, and patent leather shoes. He also carried leather gloves and a silver mounted stick. His clothes were regarded as the very acme of fashion for young men about town at that time, and were largely in vogue among the Indian youth prosecuting their studies in Law at one of the four institutions called the Inns of Court. There were four Inns of Court; Lincoln's Inn, Gray's Inn, the Middle Temple, and the Inner Temple and the first, where Kitchlew had enrolled, was considered by Indians the most aristocratic.

For the next two years Kitchlew was caught up in the whirl of London life. Renewing contact with some old acquaintances, he was very much the gay man of fashion - very well dressed, well mannered, almost 'European'. Music concerts, golf, watching cricket at Lords, and waltzing on ice rinks rather than attending lectures and studying Law, took up his time. The pastimes seem to have been innocent but very

expensive. Never overloaded with money, Kitchlew now found himself often in debt, was forced to pawn his watch, sometimes had no money even for bus or tube fares and more frequently approached his father Azizuddin for supplementary grants. He never in his life had any money sense. "If I had £600 a year, I am sure I would spend it all with the greatest ease and then get into debt." On one occasion Kitchlew wanted to entertain his Turkish friends and he wrote to his father Azizuddin for an immediate remittance of £100. On receipt of Kitchlew's letter Azizuddin was alarmed. Kitchlew's expenditure in 1911 was £600, which in those days enabled most Indian students to pay for a stay of two to three years in London. Far from carrying off the scholarships and prizes at the Bar examination, Kitchlew managed to pass, and seemed more interested in concerts. And, when the next year Kitchlew passed the Bar finals, Azizuddin expressed his great relief.

On his return from England, Kitchlew started legal practice at Rawalpindi largely because his sister and lawyer husband were residing there. At this time Saifuddin's father Azizuddin was still at Hyderabad waiting for payment of shawls he sold to state authorities. Kitchlew went to Hyderabad and was successful in obtaining his father's dues amounting to 10 lakhs rupees (£76000) which was a huge amount in 1914. His father Azizuddin continued staying in Hyderabad for a long time, accompanied by his son Obaidullah. Azizuddin died, after a short illness, at Amritsar in 1918. He was considered to be 'Rais-e-Azam' of Amritsar.

Saifuddin was twenty-seven when he married a Kashmiri girl of twenty-two in 1915, from a family settled in Amritsar. Within a few months of the marriage, he gave up his legal work at Rawalpindi and shifted to Amritsar, the home of his brothers as well as his wife's family.

Sadat Bano was the daughter of Khan Bhadur Mian Mohammad Hafiz Ullah, a leading and respected lawyer of Amritsar who had received his honorific title from the British Government and was undoubtedly helpful to Saifuddin in setting up legal practice in Amritsar.

Kitchlew's wife Sadat Bano was of medium build, 5 feet 6 inches tall and a person of considerable fortitude and character. In the coming years she was to have more than a woman's fair share of tribulation. Married to a man then well set on the road to fame and fortune, she lacked nothing of the material adjuncts to comfort, ease and happiness. For many years Sadat Bano knew the splendour and luxury of an affluent

home. The Kitchlew household, when she entered it, was a typical Muslim joint family comprising Jalaluddin and Ibrahim's sons and a considerable cohort of cousins, all living under one roof and presided over by the strong willed lady who was Jalaluddin's wife. It was no easy thing for a young girl of twenty-two to adjust herself to the environment. Saifuddin lavished on her the love and care of a devoted husband, but it is doubtful whether Sadat Bano felt any different from a bird in a golden cage, until her husband shifted to a house next door a few years after their marriage. Saifuddin Kitchlew was a successful Barrister then but still to reach the fabulous heights he achieved later.

The Kitchlew's had five sons and five daughters during their long and happy life. The sons were Anwar, Talat, Khalid, Mansoor and Taufiq. The daughters, Zubeida, Sadaquat, Rafat, Zahida and Azra.

Kitchlew constantly interfered in household matters; which incensed Sadat Bano. He considered himself her teacher, which annoyed her. He imposed new rigid rules of behaviour. The blind infatuated love he gave to Sadat Bano was a diminishing recompense for these tribulations. But 'A Muslim wife', Kitchlew declared, 'regards implicit obedience to her husband as the highest religion.' Kitchlew in this period was a very Muslim husband. At times Sadat Bano would have failed to notice the kindness.

Frequently Kitchlew's friends and his law clerks and assistants, whom he treated like sons, stayed with him. Among those non-paying boarders was Jamil. Jamil had hardly settled in the Kitchlew household when he began secretly to bring women into his room. Kitchlew was informed but he refused to believe it until on one occasion he caught Jamil in the act. Jamil had to leave the house at once. Later Jamil apologised and reformed himself and became one of Kitchlew's most ardent supporters in the struggle for Independence.

Kitchlew as Barrister won a number of legal cases for the Maharajah of Baroda. The Maharajah was so pleased with Kitchlew's work that he gave a few gifts to his family as personal tokens of appreciation. Kitchlew's views of personal possessions had been gradually changing. He was beginning to see danger in wealth and property. Kitchlew spent many sleepless nights over this matter. The gifts might be construed as payment for services which he had rendered to the Maharajah with no thought of material gain. He wanted to give them up. Torn between the yearning for financial security and the desire for freedom, he paced up and down for

hours arguing with himself. He was also aware that he faced a family crisis if he decided to return the gifts. But by morning his mind was made up: the gifts must go. He had won his battle. In order to make the renunciation a fact beyond family dispute, he drafted a letter which elaborated a plan to use the gifts to create a community fund.

Kitchlew's eldest son Anwar died at a very young age. Kitchlew withstood the shock with courage. He had loved his son dearly but in spite of this bereavement, he marched forward with his political career.

Kitchlew's eldest daughter, Zubeida, popularly known among the family as 'Lali', was a constant companion at his public meetings until she married Colonel Khurshid Minto of the Pakistan Army.

CHAPTER 4

THE NATIONAL SCENE

The early 20th century, when Saifuddin Kitchlew grew to manhood, was a period in which the Indian masses had little political consciousness. Politics was the business of the educated few, the landed gentry and the bureaucracy. The Indian National Congress, founded in 1885, was yet to become a mass movement. Muslim participation in its activities was especially conspicuous by its absence. The literary rate among the Muslims was very low, but there were numerous families of Muslim Jagirdars, Zamindars, Nawabs and similar people who were naturally involved in politics. It was among these people that in October 1906, seventy leading Muslims led by the Aga Khan were granted an audience by the British Viceroy Lord Minto, at the summer retreat in Simla. They carried with them a petition signed by 'Nobles', Ministers of various states, great Landowners, Lawyers, Merchants, and many others of His Majesty's Mohammedan Subjects. These groups were interested in protecting their own class interests and Lord Minto assured the delegation that he was entirely in accord with their case.

It was on 30th December 1906 that the Indian Muslim League was established. Leaders who played a prominent part in creating the organization at Dacca were Nawab Viqar Ul Mulk, Nawab Salim Ullah of Dacca and Mazhar Ul Haq. Maulana Mohammad Ali was one of the principal draftsmen of the Muslim League constitution. The Muslim League declared that the main object was 'to foster a sense of loyalty to the British Government among the Muslims of India,' to look after the political interests of Indian Muslims and to bring about better understanding between Muslims and other communities.

It was inevitable that some of the people would be orthodox Muslims. The British made it conscious policy to divide and rule with the help of such elements. To quote one such policy maker of the British Raj, "our endeavour should be to uphold in full force the (for us fortunate) separation which exists between the different religions and races, not to endeavour to amalgamate them. Divide et Impera should be the principle of Indian Government." (Lieutenant Colonel Coke, Commandant of Moradabad, 1860). Even so, there were many Muslims who were either too clever to be duped by the British or too patriotic to allow themselves to be exploited by

them. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who later became the founder of Pakistan, was originally completely secular in outlook. He joined the Muslim League because he felt the Indian National Congress was getting too 'extreme'. It was going beyond the limits prescribed by law, and Jinnah's constitutionalism could not tolerate this heresy. He soon became the most popular spokesman of the Muslim League, but at the same time remained a member of the Indian National Congress.

The Congress demanded 'Self Government' within the Empire, asserted that India was ready for responsible Government. It also demanded fiscal autonomy for India and a declaration of Indian rights. The Home Rule League was established in 1916 by Tilak and Mrs. Besant, a marked departure from the passive and loyalist outlook of the Indian National Congress at that time. Then at the historical Lucknow Session of the Congress, at the end of 1916, the moderates and extremists, who had parted bitterly nine years earlier, were reunited in the common cause.

Another event of even greater political significance occurred at Lucknow, the Congress and the Muslim League joined hands in a demand for virtual Dominion Status on the basis of a scheme for the representation of Hindus and Muslims in the various legislatures. The ambassador of Hindu Muslim unity at that time was Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Jinnah realized that the interests of the Muslim and Hindu citizens of India were basically the same; so, he worked hard for Congress - Muslim League unity. It was Jinnah who encouraged Congress and League Leaders to attend each other's annual conferences, which led to both organizations meeting in Lucknow in 1916 and concluding a Congress League pact which came to be known as the Lucknow Pact. The Pact accepted the principle of separate electorates for Muslims, but more important, it brought wider sections of Muslims into the movement against the British. Among these there were a large number of intellectual, intelligent, liberal and genuinely religious Muslims who realized that religion is an entirely personal matter, a matter of the spirit and not of appearances, not to be mixed up with the struggle for pelf and power which is involved in political life. One spokesman of this group made this very clear. "When religion becomes the backbone of reaction and anti-progressive forces seek refuge under its cloak, when religion becomes only a force of particular dogmas and ceremonies and its inborn spirit of revolutionary change is dead, then such a religion becomes only a tool for perpetrating all the sins of injustice. When religion as the dominant creed

of a particular society loses its fervour and revolutionary spirit of changing itself and changing others, then to vest such a religion with governmental powers is equivalent to placing dangerous authority in the hands of Reaction to be ultimately used against the people." This was the creed of Maulana - Obeidullah Sindhi, a radical religious Leader who was a force among the newly-conscious Muslims in India's politics.

The agreement arrived at between the Congress and the League known as Lucknow Pact was largely a product of concessions offered from both sides. It was obvious that Jinnah was at his best in composing constitutional differences and offering compromise solutions likely to be accepted by both sides. Congress conceded separate Muslim electorates and was even agreeable to their introduction in Provinces like Punjab and the Central Provinces where they had not existed before. Muslims were to get nine-tenths of the seats in Punjab to which they were entitled on a purely numerical basis. The result was that their representation rose from twenty five per cent to fifty per cent (as a result of the Pact). In Bengal, Muslim acquisition on the basis of separate representation was not so impressive. They were given only three quarters of the seats to which they were entitled on their population basis. The result was that they obtained only forty per cent of the seats. Mr. Fazl Ul Huq was also a signatory of the Pact. Muslims were to complain later that particularly in Bengal they were deprived of the majority position. The result was that separate electorates had been conceded by the British to the Muslims as a minority. Therefore, they were not entitled to have separate electorates in Provinces where they were in majority. The Muslim complaint was that their majority in such provinces was not very large and also that they were backward and grossly under represented even in these majority provinces. However, in Muslim minority provinces Muslims obtained a representation about double that which they would have got on a purely numerical basis. Similarly at the Centre, they obtained one-third representation in the council by separate Muslim constituencies. They, of course, had to give up their right to vote in general constituencies which had been accorded to them by the reforms of 1909. The Congress also went so far as to concede that no bill or resolution concerning a community could be passed if three-fourths of the representatives of the community were opposed to it. Most of these principles as well as other constitutional features of the Lucknow Pact, were later incorporated in the Government of India Act 1919. The Hindu-Muslim concordat

of Lucknow was the high water mark of Hindu-Muslim unity. It was obvious that it was all the work and creation of constitutionalists both in the Muslim League and the Congress. All this was to be swept away by tides which followed in the wake of the Amritsar tragedy and the Khilafat Agitation.

During this time constitutionalists like M.A. Jinnah were relegated to the background and men like Maulana - Mohammad Ali, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Mahatma Gandhi were called upon to guide the political destinies of Muslims and Hindus.

As the first world war drew to a close, discontentment and eager anticipation became increasingly felt on the Indian scene. The principle of self determination for all peoples, proclaimed by President Wilson in his fourteen points, stirred the imagination of the intelligentsia. Hopes and expectations had also been raised by the British pledge of ultimate self-government for India contained in the Montague declaration of 1917, a land-mark in the history of the British Raj. The first instalment of self government was promised soon after the war; proposals to the effect were anxiously awaited.

What India got instead was a rude awakening to the fact that no-where have Imperial Powers relinquished their hold unless forced to the conclusion that it was no longer profitable to them.

India's freedom movement was in for a shock and the shock waves threw up a new Leader.

The shock was provided early in 1919 by the Rowlatt bills and the Amritsar tragedy; the leadership by Gandhi and Kitchlew. To many, the Rowlatt bills seemed like a tragic omen of renewed repression, for they granted sweeping powers of preventive detention or enforced residence on all suspected political agitators. They were received with dismay by every section of Indian public opinion. But only Gandhi and Kitchlew responded with a direct challenge. They first requested the Viceroy to withhold his assent from the 'Black Bills' as they were called. When the appeal failed Gandhi formed a 'Satyagraha' society whose members were pledged to disobey the law through non-violent resistance.

This was the setting when Saifuddin-Kitchlew took prominent part in the 'Satyagraha' movement and became the most dynamic Leader in Amritsar and one of the leading lights of the freedom struggle in north India.

CHAPTER 5

ALL EYES ON AMRITSAR

Amritsar lies in the centre of the Punjab some thirty miles to the east of Lahore, and two hundred and fifty miles north-north west of Delhi. In 1919 its population was about 160,000 made up of Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims. To the Sikhs the city was a sacred one and of utmost importance, as their Golden Temple is there. The Punjab itself (one is speaking of the time before India became divided) was a great province of about 136,000 square miles, that is 15,000 square miles greater than the area of England, Scotland, Wales and the whole of Ireland put together.

Amritsar is roughly oval in shape, with the Golden Temple as its centre. In 1919, the business quarters were situated in the northern quarter of the city in the Hall Bazaar area. Here were the Kotwali (the police headquarters), the town hall, the powerhouse and the Banks. The Deputy Commissioner, whose Bungalow was situated in the Civil Lines, was Miles Irving, a member of the I.C.S. with twenty years service behind him. Irving was a far-sighted official and he wrote to his superiors the following lines:

"The soil is prepared for discontentment by a number of causes. The poor are hit by high prices and the rich by severe income tax assessment and the excess profits act. From one cause and another the people are restless and discontented and ripe for the revolution."

The main centre of unrest in the aftermath of the war was the Punjab, a land of the five rivers, the home of the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs and the reservoir of the Indian Army.

Indeed, it was primarily against the upsurge of revolutionary agitation in the province that the Rowlatt bills were passed. Gandhi and Kitchlew had stated that they would resist the Rowlatt bills with a nation-wide hartal, i.e. suspension of all business and 'Satyagraha', non-violent agitation against the government. In Amritsar, Deputy - Commissioner Irving came to know only on March 29, 1919, that a 'hartal' was being planned for the next day under the Leadership of Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew. He took emergent measures but the 'hartal' passed off without any violence, the people obeying Kitchlew's orders implicitly. Over 30,000 people attended his meeting on 30th March, 1919. Kitchlew got up to say, "The message of Mahatma Gandhi has been read

to you. All citizens should be prepared for resistance. This does not mean that this sacred town or country should be flooded with blood. The resistance should be a passive one. Do not use harsh words in respect of any policeman or traitor which might cause him pain or lead to the possibility of a breach of peace."

Irving reported the meeting to Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the result being that on the 4th April, an order was served on Kitchlew restraining him from organizing meetings. Meanwhile the news had leaked out that a second 'hartal' was to be observed on 6th April. But the Congress decided to postpone it for some time. Irving received a definite assurance that the 'hartal' would not take place.

However, at a meeting that same afternoon attended by Kitchlew, the decision was reversed. This convinced Irving that Kitchlew alone wielded the real power. A short time previously he had been to see Kitchlew and warned him, "that he was playing with fire and setting in motion forces he could not control," but Kitchlew was in no mood to take orders from Irving and went steadily ahead with his campaign.

To galvanize mass support, Gandhi proclaimed April 6th as 'Satya graha' day, a day of hartal and a day of fasting, a day of mass meetings to protest against the hated legislation. In major cities and provincial towns alike the call to non-co operation evoked a wide-spread response. The demonstrations were peaceful on the whole, but minor clashes with the police occurred.

On 8th April, Irving, now convinced that trouble was at hand, wrote to the Commissioner of Lahore pressing urgently for reinforcements of troops. The hartal, Irving thought, had been arranged solely to test the efficiency of the organization and the discipline of the people. He also pointed out that the Congress party itself did not hold the major power; "They were in the outer circle. They passed a resolution against a strike, but promptly came to heel when Kitchlew ordered it." Irving continued, "Kitchlew himself I regard as a representative of very much bigger men. Who they are can only be guessed at. I am trying to get in touch with the new Leaders. I was wrong in thinking I could influence Kitchlew. He is too deeply in. I think that things will be worse before they are better and that for the present we must rely on ourselves."

On 10th April, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was summoned by the District Magistrate of Amritsar and was then held incommunicado. He was taken to Dharamsala prison. As word drifted through the Bazaars, crowds gathered quickly and

began to march to the civil lines, the European and upper class Indian section of the town, to demand Kitchlew's release. Police barred their way, a skirmish occurred, and eleven demonstrators were killed. Bitter and angry, the others marched back to the city and retaliated with arson and mob violence in which five Europeans were killed. A few days later similar scenes of violence occurred in the nearby towns of Kasur and Gujranwala. The crowds in these towns were constantly raising slogans and shouting 'Kitchlew Zindabad' (Long Live Kitchlew). Martial Law was proclaimed and public meetings were banned in Amritsar.

The situation was tense and people showed their resentment against the British soldiers by stoning the statue of Queen Victoria and killing two British bank managers. Arson cases were reported, tension mounted hourly. Something had to be done to calm down the people so the national workers decided to call a meeting at the house of Swami Anubhave - Annand who was a pious old man held in high esteem by the people.

It was decided that a public meeting should be arranged, the purpose of the meeting being two fold, primarily to protest against the arrest of their Leader Dr. Kitchlew, and secondly to cool down public sentiments and restore peace in the city. A public park in the heart of Amritsar known as Jallianwala Bagh was chosen as the venue of this historic meeting. Jallianwala Bagh is enclosed on three sides by high walls which form the boundaries of adjoining houses. The only exit is wide enough to allow but a few persons to pass at a time. The meeting was scheduled for the 13th April but the same day the Government enforced a curfew in Amritsar. In view of the situation some nationalist workers suggested that the meeting should be postponed but Lala Hans Raj Malhotra, who was then Secretary of the local Congress Committee, insisted that the meeting must be held, as people from nearby towns had already started gathering in huge numbers at the Bagh. People from all walks of life came, some on foot, some on donkey carts and some in their horse carriages. The atmosphere on that beautiful April morning was festive. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were all together showing mutual affection and unity. Young children played around while their parents chatted and sang and waited for the meeting to proceed. Little did they know that this beautiful day would turn into horror - a tragedy that will never be forgotton. The meeting began with the slogans of 'Allah O' Akbar', 'Dr. Kitchlew Zindabad' and 'Hindu Muslim Itehad (unity) Zindabad.' An estimated 30,000 people

gathered in the Bagh. A huge photograph of Dr. Kitchlew was placed on the empty chair. The massive crowd was continuously shouting, "Kitchlew Ko Raha Karo," (Release Kitchlew). "Kitchlew Zindabad" (Long Live Kitchlew). Suddenly there appeared at the entrance 150 soldiers under the command of the British General Dyer, and without giving any notice to the crowd to disperse, the military blocked the only exit. Within three minutes an order was given to fire at point blank range on the unarmed mass. Panic enveloped the crowd; they were caught in a veritable grave-yard. Old, young, women and children were mercilessly butchered to death. The 8 feet walls of the Bagh were splashed with the blood of the innocent, which remained there for years to come. There were dead bodies everywhere. People who tried to escape were stampeded. Some tried to scale the walls but were gunned down by the soldiers. Blood flowed freely on this tragic day.

According to the Hunter Commission of Inquiry, 379 people were killed and about 1,500 wounded. The only reason the others were spared, according to Dyer's own testimony before the Commission, was that he had exhausted his ammunition. It was perhaps the worst crime in the annals of British rule in India, a massacre of defenceless people who could not even seek cover from the merciless attack. Matters were not improved when the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, gave his official approval.

In his determination to teach the natives a lesson, Dyer ruled Amritsar with an iron hand. Public floggings were not infrequent; detention of all nationalist leaders was the order of the day. These were tense days in Amritsar and a wave of anger swept the land. Jallianwala Bagh became hallowed ground and the shooting a day of remembrance for the Congress. Of course, Kitchlew became the national hero.

The British were to pay dearly. As a well known British historian of the sub-continent remarked, "the Amritsar tragedy was a turning point in Indo-British relations almost as important as the mutiny (1857), primarily because of the 'assumption' implied in the behaviour of responsible Englishmen and the evidence before the Hunter Commission that Indians could and should be treated as an inferior race."

The Punjab tragedy roused Indians as no other act since the rebellion of 1857.

Kitchlew was sentenced to transportation for life by the Martial Law Commission. For Nehru and Gandhi, along with many others, it was a profound insult to the national honour, pride and self-respect. The Amritsar tragedy and the sentence

on Kitchlew (who was Nehru's close friend at Cambridge) was a personal shock to Nehru, India's future Prime Minister.

The slaughter at Jallianwala Bagh and Kitchlew's arrest was a landmark in Nehru's life. It brought him into direct personal contact with the worst features of British rule and with the sufferings of his own people as a result of British brutality. Early in June 1919 the Congress established a Committee of inquiry into the Punjab disturbances. Many of the outstanding nationalist Leaders of the day were active members, including Gandhi, Moti Lal Nehru, Pundit Malaviya and C.R. Dass.

Kitchlew's sentence of transportation for life created a great uproar in India and also in some European countries. Protest meetings were organized and the people of the Punjab seemed restive. The Government responded with a dramatic gesture and released Kitchlew in December 1919. As soon as Kitchlew came out of the prison, a huge crowd gathered in Amritsar and took a historic procession through the city, carrying Kitchlew on their shoulders. According to one agency report, "it appeared that the whole population of Amritsar city was out to greet Kitchlew. The people arranged felicitation gatherings and distributed sweets in the streets in a most joyful manner that one could hardly forget for a long time to come."

At the close of 1919, the Congress met in its annual session at Amritsar in a symbolic act of defiance of the Raj. Moti Lal Nehru presided. Gandhi, who was rapidly emerging as the dominant figure in the Congress, the exponent of non-co-operation, told the delegates, "The Government went mad at that time; we went mad also. I say do not return madness with madness but return madness with sanity and the whole situation will be yours."

Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, the famous Indian poet who was knighted by the British in 1915, resigned the honour in protest against the British repressive measures in the Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar. Dr. Tagore condemned the British authorities in the Punjab and General Dyer in particular, who brutally killed 379 people and injured 1,500 in the Jallianwala Bagh. Dr. Tagore also praised Kitchlew's bravery. (Kitchlew was the main architect of anti-Rowlatt agitation in Amritsar).

After the historic session at Amritsar Gandhi, Moti Lal Nehru, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Jawahar Lal Nehru stayed with Dr. Kitchlew for some time at his house and had detailed talks together for the future plan of

Independence.

When the debate on the Rowlatt bills in the Indian Legislative Council came in for discussion, Mohammad Ali - Jinnah bitterly criticized and warned the Goverment of its consequences. He further warned that the people of India would not tolerate the Rowlatt bills. But in spite of his protest the bills were passed. Mohammad Ali Jinnah resigned from the council as a mark of protest. Kitchlew received great encouragement from Jinnah at this crucial hour.

CHAPTER 6

A CHAMPION OF ALL RELIGIONS

The aftermath of the first world war brought about a regrouping of forces in many parts of the world, with Britain playing a major role through a number of moves aimed at strengthening its hold on the Empire.

In India, the Imperial power threw a sop to the freedom fighters in the shape of the Government Of India Act 1919 which promised a slackening of the reins of slavery while retaining the alien leash.

In the 'Middle East', it connived at the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and (under the Treaty of Sevres) the liquidation of the power of the Caliphate - the highest religious and political office in the Islamic world. This naturally created a furore in India, the country with the biggest Muslim population in the world. These twin streams of discontent in India soon merged to make a swollen river that threatened to breach the embankments of the British Indian Empire. The defeat of Turkey in the first world war caused anguish and profound disquiet among many Indian Muslims. In their eyes, the Ottoman Empire was a sentimental counterpoise to British power which had dislodged the Moghuls in 1857.

The dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire aroused anger and hostility. It was taken as an added insult to Islam everywhere. Deputations of Indian Muslims waited on the Viceroy and went to London but in vain. Chief among those who voiced the feelings of the Indian Muslims on this issue were Saifuddin Kitchlew, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Jan Mohammad.

A Khilafat Committee consisting of the Ali Brothers, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Jan Mohammad was formed. It attracted Hindus and Muslims alike. The words 'Khilafat' and 'Swaraj' were on everybody's lips. 'Khilafat' was interpreted by rural people as a word originating from Khilaf which in Urdu meant 'against' and so they thought they were supposed to oppose the Government. Hindu-Muslim unity was at its height. Jan Mohammad arranged a meeting of the Khilafat Conference at Larkana on the 6th, 7th and 8th June, 1920. The meeting was presided over by Pir Sahib of Jhandewala. Jan Mohammad was an active member of the reception committee. The meeting was attended by prominent persons such as Maulana - Mohammad Ali, Maulana Abdul Bari Lucknawi, Maulana Azad,

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, Seth Abdulla Haroon, Maulana Amroti, Rais Ghulam Mohammad and Mahatma Gandhi.

In 1921, at the time of the Baqarid (Muslim Religious Festival) Muslims voluntarily gave up the sacrifice of the cows. Swami Shradhanand, one of the Hindu religious Leaders, was allowed to enter the Jama Masjid of Delhi to deliver an address. But for Muslims it was primarily a religious movement. The Jamiyat-Ul Ulama-i-Hind issued a fatwa signed by 925 eminent Muslim divines sanctioning the programme of non-violent non-co-operation.

The Khilafat Movement was dominated by religious ideas and religious Leaders. This was not only a breaking away from the tradition of loyalty to the British Government started by Sir Sayyed, but also a complete eclipse of the Leadership of westernized Leaders like Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Sir Fazl-i-Hussain and Sir Mian Shafi.

The idea that owing to the flagrant disregard of the law of Islam by the British Government, India had become a dar-ul-harab spread widely particularly in the North West Frontier and Sind. The result was that thousands of Muslims, as many as 18,000 in the month of August 1920, mostly from Sind and the North West Frontier, migrated to Afghanistan. They had sold their lands and property and with wives and children made their long trek in carts in the direction of the Khyber Pass. They had been told that the Afghan Government would welcome them with open arms and fertile fields.

Afghan authorities, alarmed by such an enormous influx, were compelled to turn the emigrants back. It is difficult to establish who was responsible for misleading such a large number of Muslims. According to one version the idea of migration was originated by Maulana Azad (Mazhar Ansari, Tarikh-i-Muslim League).

It was on the 8th, 9th and 10th July 1921, that the All India Khilafat Conference met in Karachi. Nearly 15,000 people were present. Maulana Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew made fiery speeches before the crowd. The famous Karachi resolution, for which the Ali Brothers and Dr. Kitchlew had to face trial and imprisonment later, was passed. Some of the salient resolutions were:

1) The meeting of the All India Khilafat Conference declares allegiance of the Muslim population to His Majesty the Sultan of Turkey, the Commander of the Faithful, and gives him an assurance that they will not rest content until they have secured complete fulfilment of the Khilafat demands.

2) It records its sorrows at the death of Jan Mohammad who

led the Hijrat Movement and sends its condolence to his family.

3) It further congratulates those workers in Sind who have undergone imprisonment in the cause of their religion and Country, and hopes that their efforts will meet with success.

4) This meeting of the All India Khilafat Conference declares that, so long as the demands of Indian Muslims regarding the integrity of the Khilafat and the preservation of the sanctity of Jazirat-ul-Arab and the Holy places, which are based upon their religious canons, are not fulfilled, neither shall they rest in Peace nor shall they leave it to the enemies of Islam; that the entire Provinces of Thrace and Smyrna shall form the indissoluble components of the territories of the Turkish Sultans they used to be before the war, and in no part of them shall Muslims tolerate the influence and interference of Greek or any other power. The Muslims shall never agree to the conditions the Allies wish to impose upon the Turkish Government or in its Military, Naval and Air Forces, or in connection with the financial, economic or judicial administration, as that would tend to interfere with the complete Independence of the Khilafat and the Sultanate. This Conference calls upon local Committees to make fresh declarations to the above effect so that no doubt be left as to the religious obligation of the Muslims.

5) Whereas Mesopotamia contains holy places, such as the burial places of the descendants of the Prophet and Holy Saints and is in addition an integral part of the Jazirat-ul-Arab, the influence, residence or entrance of non Muslim nations without the authority of Islamic powers is not permissible by religion, and in case a colonization of the above character comes about, it would conflict with their Holy Shariat. The Mussulmans are convinced the Americans would take advantage of their nearness to the Holy Places and revive their old enmities towards Islam. The Conference therefore demands that the above Country be immediately vacated.

6) The meeting of the All India Khilafat Conference heartily congratulates Ghazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha and the Angora Government upon their magnificent victories and the success of their most desperate (or self-sacrificing) endeavours in upholding the Laws of Islam, and this meeting prays to Almighty God that they may soon succeed in expelling the whole of the armies of the foreign Government from every corner of the Turkish Empire. In addition this meeting clearly proclaims that it is in every way religiously unlawful for a Mussulman at the present moment to continue in the British

Army or to induce others to join the Army and it is the duty of all the Mussulmans in general and Ulemas in particular to see that these religious commandments are brought home to every Mussulman in the Army. Furthermore this meeting also announces that if the British Government were to take any Military measures against the Angora Government, directly or indirectly, openly or secretly, then the Mussulmans of India will be compelled to commence the breaking of Laws, that is civil disobedience, with the concurrence of the Congress and to proclaim in the Complete Independence of India and the Indians and the establishment of a Republic for the Government of India.

7) The meeting of the All India Khilafat Conference calls upon all local Khilafat Committees to devise measures to absolutely stop drinking within their districts, and congratulate the workers and volunteers of places where the liquor traffic has diminished and further commands to them to put forth their best efforts to achieve greater success.

8) That this meeting of the All India Khilafat Conference calls upon all Provincial, District and village Committees to put forth their last efforts to enlist a crore of Khilafat members and collect forty lakhs of rupees to relieve the distress in Smyrna and aid the Muhajirin Relief Fund.

9) This conference strongly appeals to the Pirs and Zamindars of Sind to take more interest in the Khilafat Movement than they have done hitherto, and request the former to command their disciples to do the same."

Gandhi gauged the measure of Muslim feeling on the Khilafat issue and succeeded in combining all the anti-Imperialist forces into one mass movement. Gandhi had been a leader of the oppressed 'blacks' in South Africa. On his return to India he first became one of Gokhales social services workers. But within a few years, all the Senior Congress Leaders were dead, including Gokhale and Tilak. And thereby hangs a tale.

Tilak was taken on his last journey on the Ist August, 1920. A funeral procession over two miles long, comprising over a quarter of a million people, followed his body. Tilak was a Brahman and some of his orthodox friends and relatives who were none too happy with Gandhi's anti-untouchability work decided that only Brahmans should lift the bier. When Gandhi came forward and bent low to lend a shoulder, someone tried to obstruct him. Gandhi stood up for a moment and said, "Public men know no caste." He bent down again and lifted one end of the bier. The spell of orthodoxy at

the ceremony was broken and the bier was in return shouldered by Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Maulana Shaukat Ali, along its route to Chowpatty.

Through such small details was inter-communal nationalism forged in India. Kitchlew was soon to be a hero in the causes of many communities - Hindus and Sikhs as well as his own. But for the present, back to Gandhi.

We have just seen how he infused even a funeral with the spirit of public secularism. In the words of Dr. Rajindra - Prasad, "Mahatma Gandhi shifted politics from the drawing rooms of the educated and the businessmen to the huts of the tillers of the soil."

To unite all sections of the people against the British, he now urged a triple boycott of the elections under the Government of India Act of 1919, of Government Schools and Colleges, and of the Law Courts. To the surprise of many, both Officials and Congressmen, almost two third of electors stayed away from the polls in November 1920. The annual session of the Indian National Congress in Nagpur a few weeks later proved to be a landmark in many respects.

Gandhi's undisputed Leadership of India was acknowledged for the first time. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, always a conservative, resigned from the party, never again to return. In perspective, his departure was of great importance and political significance, for in later years it was he who provided the dynamic and successful leadership of the movement in favour of the partition of India and the creation of the state of Pakistan.

Kitchlew, on the other hand, was rightly described as one of the preservers of India's cultural integrity. He did far more than anyone had ever done before. In the long history of our country few men touched our national life so intensely as Kitchlew did. We have noticed above the boycott of Government schools and colleges was one of the planks of Gandhi's 'non Co-operation' programme to oust British influence from national life. In persuance of this programme, Kitchlew took active steps in the field of 'national education' and became one of the founders of the Jamia Millia (National University).

Jamia Millia was founded at Aligarh by Maulana - Mohammad Ali and his few close friends. Dr. Kitchlew was one of them. Jamia Millia was later shifted to Delhi, and became extremely popular and important for the thousands of families who sent their children for 'national education' in preference to 'British education'. Dr. Zakir Hussain, who was

appointed its Vice-Chancellor, served the institution for a number of years before he became Governor of Bihar and then President of India.

Saifuddin Kitchlew attended the Nagpur Session of the All India Congress in December 1920 with Gandhi, Moti Lal - Nehru, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Maulana Azad and Asaf Ali. When Mahatma Gandhi moved the non-Co-operation resolution, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew seconded it. He opposed Jinnah's suggestion to the delegates to show abhorrence for Gandhi's civil disobedience campaign and to stick to the constitutional methods of agitation.

Kitchlew attained even greater prominence in the Congress for the next three years and became General Secretary of the All India Congress in 1924. This was as much a result of his work for non-Co-operation movement as for his leadership of the Muslim nationalists. He threw himself into Khilafat Movement and united the Muslims of Punjab behind him. Already a marked man, his activities in 1921 made him a thorn in the flesh of the Government. He was arrested along with the Ali Brothers in September 1921, following a very fiery speech delivered by him inciting Muslim soldiers of the Indian Army to refuse to fight their Muslim brethren in Turkey. Gandhi's boycott movement openly espoused the view of the Khilafat Leaders, "only a Mussulman divine can speak for Islam," he wrote at that time, "but speaking for Hinduism and speaking for nationalism, I have no hesitation in saying that it is sinful for any one, either as soldier or civilian, to serve this government which has proved treacherous to the Muslims of India and which has been guilty of the inhumanities of the Punjab."

Tension mounted steadily in the autumn of 1921 and reached its peak with the arrival of the Prince of Wales, for a good will visit, on November 19th. Gandhi proclaimed a nation-wide 'hartal'. To the surprise and consternation of many it was a great success. The Government at that point struck and struck hard. Congress volunteer organizations were outlawed and a policy of mass arrests was introduced. In the next few months about 30,000 nationalists were sent to prison. Jawahar Lal Nehru and his father Moti Lal Nehru were both arrested on the 6th December and sentenced for six months. Kitchlew and the Ali Brothers were already in jail. Gandhi, all alone without his lieutenants like Nehru, Kitchlew and the Ali Brothers, continued for his fight for freedom.

Out of the sands, out of lethargy and fear, Gandhi had fashioned a mighty movement in India with the help of

Kitchlew, Ali Brothers and Nehru on the creed of non-violence. The magic word of 'Swaraj', self rule, had fired the imagination of millions. A new era in Hindu - Muslim friendship seemed at hand. Muslim Divines addressed Hindu audiences in Temples, Brahman priests reciprocated in mosques. Hindus and Muslims dined together and drank water from the same cup, symbol of mutual affection.

Gandhi, too, was arrested in March 1922. Dharamsala jail, where Kitchlew was imprisoned, consisted for the most part of a number of huge barracks where the majority of the political prisoners were confined. Kitchlew along with other political prisoners was put in an old weaving shed which stood on a wide open space. In those early days the political prisoners were allowed a certain degree of latitude, newspapers being permitted and interviews with relatives being granted freely. Kitchlew's wife Sadat Bano frequently visited her husband in jail at Dharamsala. Kitchlew spent much time in discussion and talk. Through the newspapers he could follow the progress of the movement outside. Life in prison proceeded placidly. In the morning Kitchlew would help clean and wash his little shed and do his daily quota of spinning. He found a strange relaxation in washing his own clothes. For a while the educated political prisoners conducted classes in Urdu and other elementry subjects for the benefit of others, but these came to an end when the prison authorities forbade movement or communication between the various barracks.

Prison brought with it an advantage to which Kitchlew was often to refer in the coming years. It gave him enforced leisure for relaxation. He learned to adjust himself to his surroundings. Many of his jail companions were deeply impressed by his courtesy and charm. He could laugh like a boy and could appreciate a joke. In prison Kitchlew had a passion for order and cleanliness. Working and relaxing to a strictly regulated daily regimen, he liked to enforce his sense of discipline on his fellow prisoners.

Kitchlew missed other things. For the first time he became actually aware of the bliss and felicity of home. He thought of the agony of waiting which must overwhelm his wife outside. Saifuddin Kitchlew's wife Sadat Bano waiting for her husband to come out of prison, devoted her time in looking after her family. She visited frequently political meetings of the Congress and gathered information which she passed on to Kitchlew in the prison when she visited him. During one of the meetings with her husband in jail she asked Kitchlew how he

felt about the whole situation. "Affection and Loyalty," Kitchlew declared, "are of the heart. They cannot be purchased in the Market place. We are fighting for the freedom of our Country and faith. I shall go to jail again most willingly and happily. To serve India in the battle for freedom is honour enough."

Shortly before the Delhi Congress in September 1923, Kitchlew was released along with the Ali Brothers, Maulana - Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali. Some days earlier the Provincial legislature had passed a resolution favouring political amnesty; and the moment being propitious for such a gesture the Government had acceded.

Kitchlew came out eager but not exultant. He was given a tumultuous welcome in Amritsar by the 'No Change' party and a huge procession was taken through the city. Relations, friends and colleagues came in person to greet him and others, who could not make it, sent congratulatory messages and telegrams, some of them by the poets praising Kitchlew in political verses. It was a welcome which was seldom given to any political Leader of that time.

At the beginning of January 1924 there was a significant incident. The Khumb Mela in Allahabad, held once in twelve years, is a religious ceremony when thousands of pilgrims gather to bathe at the confluence of the holy Ganges and Jamuna rivers, in a collective renunciation of their sins. The occasion could naturally be used by the national Leaders for rousing the people. The Provincial authorities, fearing trouble, banned the bathing. Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya announced his intention to violate the ban and received support in the form of a satyagraha (peaceful demonstration) by the people assembled there. Jawahar Lal Nehru himself participated. Kitchlew strongly condemned the action of the Provincial Government and said in a public statement that the people were not given the basic right to practice their religion.

Little did he know that very soon he was to suffer imprisonment and police harrassment for his moral support for the basic rights of the followers of yet another religion.

Towards the end of September 1923, the British Government had declared the Sikh's organisation, the Shiromani Gurdawara Parbandhak Committee, unlawful association because the Sikhs had been protesting against the deposition of the Sikh Maharajah of Nabha known for his nationalistic sympathies. All the members of the Committee were arrested on charges of sedition against the King. But the agitation for the restoration of the Nabha ruler continued with redoubled

zeal.

The small town of Jaitu in Nabha state became the scene of another prolonged struggle between the people and the British Overlords. Here a batch of Akalis (militant Sikhs) was arrested within the traditionally immune precincts of a Gurdawara. This aggravated the situation. To vindicate the right to worship in the Gurdawara and to redeem the impiety committed by the police, batches of 25 Akalis at a time began to issue from the Akal Takht, the Holy See of the Sikhs, in the Golden Temple at Amritsar to march on foot to Jaitu which was 120 miles away. Before they reached Jaitu, these Jathas (groups) were held up by the police, beaten up and taken to a remote desert area some 300 miles away, there to be abandoned to their fate without food and money.

After some time larger groups, 500 strong, began to be sent from Amritsar to Jaitu. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and a foreign journalist, Mr. Zimmand of the New York Times, accompanied the first of the bigger Jathas as observers. At Jaitu, the Jatha was fired upon, but the Akali Sikhs marched on in the face of a shower of bullets. Several of them fell under fire. Kitchlew, who was still with the Jatha as an Observer, was ordered to leave the State at once. He demurred, explaining that he was not participating in the agitation and that he was not violating the law, whereupon he was arrested (along with his journalist companion) and was paraded down the main street of the town, hand-cuffed and chained to a policeman. For Kitchlew this was a personal shock since his previous encounters with the police had been relatively civilized. To make matters worse, Kitchlew was kept in a foul insanitary cell with rats for companions. After a few days the trial began. Kitchlew submitted a detailed statement explaining the whole situation. No witnesses were produced; the Judge appeared to be rather scantily acquainted with the law, and the case dragged on for a week. Suddenly Kitchlew and his companion Mr. Zimmand were told that they were now being tried for an additional charge of conspiracy. The British Administrator offered to free Kitchlew and his colleague if they expressed apologies and agreed to leave at once. Kitchlew and Mr. Zimmand refused. When the trial ended, they were given a six months sentence on the first charge and 18 months on the conspiracy charge. The sentences were suspended, however, Kitchlew and his colleague were allowed to leave the State.

On February 27, 1924, forty-seven members of the Central Legislation Assembly moved an adjournment to discuss

the Jaitu firing. Among them were Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya. A day later the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress met in Delhi under the Presidentship of Maulana Mohammad Ali and passed a resolution of sympathy with the victims of Jaitu and promised assistance to the sufferers. A Congress Akali Bureau was set up in Amritsar. Thereafter Saifuddin Kitchlew became a popular hero among the Sikhs also. The Sikhs in Amritsar in particular, who had already known and respected him for his part in national politics, and the Jallianwala Bagh affair, approved his bold action during the Nabha agitation. Some of the Sikhs began calling him 'Saifa Singh' as a mark of one-ness in accordance with their own respected religious practice of suffixing the word 'Singh' to every Sikh's name.

This was the high-water mark of communal amity in India. Alas, the ebb followed all too soon. The years between 1919 and 1937, which were marked by some of the most militant movements against British rule and mass civil disobedience under the leadership of the Congress, also witnessed widespread communal disturbances. These continued unabated for nearly thirty years, interrupted only by brief spells of uneasy peace. Gandhi had picked up where Tilak left off. His advocacy of cow protection, Hindi Prachar, Harijan Seva, and like causes appeared to many as Hindu in character. Such slogans as 'Swaraj' and 'Ram Raj' were defined many times by the Muslim League Leaders as an attempt at creating a Hindu Raj. The slogan undoubtedly gave a convenient argument with which they could convince the Muslim masses about the Congress being a body catering to Hindu interests alone. These apprehensions were further confirmed by the fact that some other eminent Leaders of the Congress like Lala Lajpat Rai and Pundit Madan Mohan - Malaviya were at the same time members of the Communal organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha and Arya Smaj which followed an aggressively hostile policy towards the Muslims.

The Hindu nationalists contributed a good deal to the development of the idea of a Hindu Nation. Lajpat Rai and Lal Chand had severely criticized the Congress theory of one nation and contended that Hindus were a nation in their own right, separate and distinct from the Muslims and others. The theory was elaborated by Vir Savarkar and Hardyal, a prominent Hindu Leader of the Punjab.

The Khilafat Movement collapsed when Ataturk - Mustafa Kamal Pasha, revolutionary Leader of post-war Turkey, abolished the office of the Caliph in March 1924.

There were serious communal clashes at Multan and Bengal in September 1922, both on the occasion of the Muharam festival. (Incidentally Dr. Kitchlew's entry to Bengal had been prohibited by the Bengal Provincial Government due to his 'Seditious' public speeches). Thus Hindus felt justified in starting movements like the Shuddhi and Sangathan. The Shuddhi Movement was started by Swami Shradhanand to reconvert to Hinduism the Malkhana Rajputs and other low castes, who, though they had embraced Islam, yet retained a number of Hindu customs and practices. Another factor which triggered this movement was the sudden realization by the Hindus after the publication of a census returns in the United Provinces that their numbers were declining in comparison with the Muslims. The Sangathan Movement was sponsored by Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya with two objects in view, firstly to remove untouchability and secondly to popularize physical excercises and sword play among Hindus to enable them to protect themselves.

The Shuddhi Movement founder Swami Shradhanand was murdered in December 1926. This heightened Hindu Muslim animosity and Hindus started threatening Muslims with reprisals.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew whose place among the Congress Muslims at that time was second to Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Ambassador of Hindu Muslim unity, became alarmed due to the formation of Shuddhi and Sangathan movements by the Hindus. He started in 1925 a movement called 'Tahrik-i-Tanzeem' to organize the Muslims for their own communal interests. To popularize the Movement, Dr. Kitchlew started publishing an Urdu Daily, the 'Tanzeem' from Amritsar, whose Editor was a well known Muslim of his own time, Abdul Majid. This movement had its swing for about a couple of years.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew with a well known Muslim Leader of the Punjab, Ghulam Bhik Nairang, started another Muslim Movement by the name of 'Tabligh' aiming at imbuing the Muslim masses with the Islamic doctrines in order to enable them to bear the onslaught of the Shuddhi movement.

Despite Kitchlew's political swings, he remained in the fore-front of the nationalist camp. Although he associated himself with the movements like 'Tanzeem' and 'Tabligh', his bonafides on the question of Hindu Muslim unity were never questioned.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and his other companions and followers contributed a great deal to the maintenance of the national character of the Indian National Congress. Kitchlew

also remained a firm believer in a constructive national building programme.

When in the summer of 1924, Gandhi moved a resolution before the All India Congress Committee limiting membership in the National Congress to persons who submitted 2000 yards of self spun yarn every month, Gandhi's resolution was supported by Dr. Kitchlew. At the Belgaum annual session of the National Congress in December 1924, Kitchlew was elected General Secretary of the organization.

The Khilafat Conference was also held at Belgaum in the Congress pandal with Dr. Kitchlew as President. It supported the Congress programme and appealed to the Muslims to participate in the Congress with greater enthusiasm.

The Session of the Muslim League was held at Bombay on December 30th 1924 with Raza Ali as President.

The meeting was well attended by a number of delegates from all over India and also by Mrs. Besant, Nehru, Patel, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Dr. - Saifuddin Kitchlew and Maulana Shaukat Ali.

Jinnah, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Maulana Shaukat - Ali took a prominent part in the discussion. The Muslim League condemned the Bengal ordinance and stood for a united front with Hindus, though Jinnah put forth a Muslim demand regarding separate representation of the Muslim community in the legislatures.

The All India Muslim League held its Session on December 30th 1925. Among those present were Sir Mian Shafi, M.A. Jinnah, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Dr. Kitchlew, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Asaf Ali. The League passed a resolution about Self-Government with many provisions to protect the Muslim interests.

Kitchlew's law practice was flourishing and he was now an excellent criminal lawyer. After his release, he became more popular in his legal profession. He conducted capital murder cases at the Lahore High Court and earned acclaim from the Chief Justice Sir Douglas Young of the Lahore High Court who was deeply impressed by Kitchlew as a criminal lawyer. He won most of the cases and earned a substantial amount.

Kitchlew's taste in clothing until 1921 was that of a typical English Barrister, dressed in a formal black jacket and striped trousers.

After his release from the jail, Kitchlew gave up his traditional dresses and started patronizing Khaddar-home spun

cloth garments which he wore till his death.

In December 1927, the Madras Session of the Congress was presided over by Dr. M.A. Ansari, whose opening speech was distinguished by a striking sentence, "Non Co-operation did not fail us we failed non-Co-operation." Ansari called upon the Congress to boycott the Simon Commission and to summon a national convention to frame a constitution for India. He stressed the need for unity. The opposition to the Simon Commission was mainly on the score that Indian representatives had no place on it. Congress opposition went deeper. Saifuddin Kitchlew, who was attending the Session, found himself plunged in this situation. He presented a resolution which reflected the new ideas setting in his mind. It defined Complete National Independence as the goal of the Indian people. Kitchlew got good support from his colleagues in this direction.

Enthusiasm had also infected the Country's youth, and Kitchlew followed keenly the proceedings of the Youth Leagues and Youth conferences meeting in different parts of the country. They varied in character, some being almost semi-religious in complexion, while others revelled in discussing revolutionary ideology and technique.

The Simon Commission provided a focus for organized opposition and crystallized, as it were, the Country's latent passion and pride.

The Youth League took a prominent part in the boycott of the Commission. Kitchlew was in great demand as a speaker on their platforms and in their forums. There was thunder in the air. The arrival of the Simon Commission in Bombay on February 3rd 1928 was the signal for hostile demonstrations. Black flags greeted its appearance in cities and towns while the cry of 'Simon go back' reverberated in its wake.

There was a police firing and lathi (stick) charges in Lahore where the 64 years old Lala Lajpat Rai and Kitchlew were heading a procession. Lajpat Rai was beaten on his chest and shoulders by Inspector Saunders, a British Officer of the Punjab Police, with a baton. Lajpat Rai died nine days later. His death loosed a wave of anger and resentment throughout the country.

Kitchlew, in a brief speech at Lahore, remarked, on Lajpat Rai's death, "The greatest of our Leaders and a popular man in the Punjab has been treated brutally by the police. We could not even protect the honour of our Leaders." After that a dull anger swept the land. Inspector Saunders of the Punjab

Police was shot dead by an angry mob.

The post Khilafat period was marked by the emergence of many alternatives to the Congress e.g. the Justice Party in Madras. In Punjab Fazl-i-Hussain brought the landowners of all religious communities, (Hindus and Sikhs as well as the Muslims) under the banner of the Unionist Party. Like Jinnah he was as much a nationalist allied to the Congress as a guardian of secular Muslim interests through the Muslim League. Like Jinnah he tried to secure the Muslim interests by proposing fixed percentages in various fields of public life.

Saifuddin Kitchlew did not react to Fazl-i-Hussain's Unionist Party at all, as he thought it consisted of rich agriculturists who were not capable of looking after the interests of the poor masses. Kitchlew was not an opportunist who could accept the offer of the Unionist Party. Had he accepted, he would have given up his principles for which he stood. Kitchlew had the love and affection for the people of his Country, not for materialistic things.

Saifuddin Kitchlew and Jawahar Lal Nehru were almost complete contemporaries. They were born and died within two years of each other; like Kitchlew, Nehru (1889 - 1964) also was of well-to-do Kashmiri extraction. Both received education in England. Both were Barristers to begin with, and woke up to the plight of the Indian masses through gradual contact and experience. Both were first alienated from the British Government by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Saifuddin Kitchlew and Jawahar Lal Nehru came into contact with each other during the Jallianwala Bagh incident. The Punjab massacre brought Kitchlew and Nehru politically nearer. With the lifting of Martial Law, the Congress embarked on aid and inquiry. The inquiry was mainly under the direction of Moti Lal Nehru. Nehru assisted Dass as his Deputy in the inquiry committee. Nehru was deeply impressed with Kitchlew's bold qualities which were later to make Kitchlew regard him as a valued friend. Jawahar Lal Nehru often visited Jallianwala Bagh. Nehru took keen interest in the inquiry of the Congress and saw a great deal of Kitchlew. Kitchlew had a habit of arguing his point gently but with firmness. Nehru noticed that generally he proved right. There grew in Nehru a respect for his political insight. It was also the first time that Nehru had the opportunity of seeing Kitchlew in close association since the Cambridge days. Nehru sensed in Kitchlew a new revolutionary force in action. Kitchlew, he reflected, was always thinking of the masses. He was of the people and for the people.

Both Kitchlew and Nehru accepted Gandhi's Leadership in boycott of Britain and carrying out of constructive work in India's towns and villages as the only way out of a sordid situation.

Kitchlew worked in the rural areas, scouring the villages of the Punjab, until he had gone through most of them carrying with him like the boy in 'excelsior', a banner with a strange device - non co-operation. Once again sharing the sufferings and sorrows of the poor he mused and wondered over their patience and toil. Kitchlew moved closer to them. Moti Lal Nehru, who had returned from Europe in the spring of 1928, was keenly interested in the All Parties Conference. The Conference met in Bombay in May when it was decided to appoint a Committee headed by Moti Lal Nehru to make a full report on the minorities issue. This report was subsequently known as the Nehru Report.

The Nehru Report was an answer to the challenge thrown to Indians by Lord Birkenhead, that the composition of the Simon Commission had to be purely British because Indians were incapable of arriving at an agreed solution as regards the constitutional problems of India.

The Committee which was called upon to draft a constitution for India was chaired by Pundit Moti Lal Nehru. It included spokesmen of the various communal points of view like those of Muslims, Sikhs, the Hindu Mahasabha, non Brahmins, and also those representing the liberal point of view and interests of labour.

The report referred to what it considered the illogical fear of Muslims of being dominated by the Hindu majority. But what was significant was the way Muslims were thinking of tackling the problem. They had made a novel suggestion that they should at least dominate in some parts of India. Hindus, on the other hand, in spite of enjoying all-India majority, were fearful of Muslim majorities in Bengal, Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and the N.W.F.P. But the report ended on an optimistic note saying that once alien authority and intervention were withdrawn from India, people would start thinking in terms of the larger economic and political problems. In such a climate, political parties based mainly on economic grounds were a natural outcome.

The report conceded Muslim demands for the formation of separate provinces of the N.W.F.P. and Sind. Probably as a sort of compensating concession to the Hindu Community, the report suggested the creation of a new Canarese speaking Province in Southern India. But on the issue of electorates,

the recommendations of the report were bound to antagonize most of the Muslims vocal interests. The report not only rejected separate electorates, but also weightage for minorities. Reservation of seats was accorded to Muslims at the Centre and in the Provinces in which they were in a minority and to no other group except the non-Muslims in the N.W.F.P. But all this was to be in strict proportion to the size of the community. 'A minority must remain a minority, whether seats are reserved for it or not.'

Muslims had always complained that even in Punjab and Bengal where they had enjoyed a small majority, they were educationally and economically so backward that without separate electorates and reservation of seats they would be in an extremely weak position. The report tried to show by detailed examination of the distribution of the Muslim population in the various districts of Punjab and Bengal that Muslims without reservations of seats could certainly expect to have elected majorities at least in proportion to their numbers in these provinces.

The Centre was to be constructed on a unitary basis. The Lower House was to be elected by general constituencies and the Upper House, though elected by Provinces, did not have equal representation for each province. Thus, the Muslims could feel that the autonomy accorded to them in Muslim majority provinces was weakened by a unitary centre. And because of the absence of separate electorates and reservation of seats, they were not even sure of their majority in Punjab and Bengal. It was obvious that Muslim Leaders were not likely to accept these proposals. According to the supplementary report of the Committee, the Aga Khan had gone so far as to advocate independence for each Indian Province by suggesting that the position of each Province must be similar to that of Bavaria in the former German Confederation rather than that of an American State or Swiss Canton.

Maulana Shaukat Ali expressed what perhaps a number of Muslim Leaders felt about the Nehru report. As a young man, he said, he had been a keen owner of greyhounds, but he had never seen greyhounds deal with a hare as the Hindus proposed to deal with the Muslims.

Maulana Mohammad Ali called upon Muslims to remain aloof from the Congress movement at a meeting of the All India Muslim Conference in Bombay.

Saifuddin Kitchlew, Subhash Chandra Bose and Jawahar Lal Nehru were busy building up their support in Youth movements and pressurising Congress into taking a clear stand

on Complete Independence as against Dominion Status. Faced with such divided forces, it was not easy for Moti Lal Nehru to produce a report which satisfied most of the Muslim grievances.

The Muslim League held its session in Calcutta on December 26th, 1928. Among those present were Maulana - Azad, Dr. Kitchlew, Maulvi Fazl Ul Haq and Sir Ali Imam. Sir- Abdur Rahim was not present, nor did the Ali Brothers attend the meeting.

The Rajah of Mahmudabad was elected President. Mohammad Ali Jinnah wanted few amendments to the Nehru Report and as he got no encouragement in that direction from the Congress Leaders, the Calcutta Session of the League adjourned without coming to any important decision.

A convention of All Parties known as the All Parties National Convention met in Calcutta in the last week of December 1928 to consider the Nehru Report.

The Muslim League appointed two delegates. Jinnah who was at that time President of the Muslim League, put forward his famous fourteen points, which were amendments to the report before the open session of the convention on 28th December 1928. His basic amendments were:

1) In the Central Legislature Muslims should have 33½ per cent of the seats.

2) That the residuary powers should vest in the Provinces and not in the Centre.

3) The Muslims in Punjab and Bengal should be represented on the basis of population for ten years subject to subsequent revision of this principle.

According to one of the delegates Mohammad Azizul Haq, "Hindu and Muslim Leaders could not reach an agreement in the convention because of the unwillingness of the Congress and Hindu Leaders to accept the Muslim demands for 33½ per cent put forward by Mohammad Ali Jinnah on behalf of the Muslim League." Jinnah with great difficulty had persuaded the Muslim Leaders to accept the principle of joint electorates with reservation of seats recommended by the Nehru report. Muslim delegates from all over India and particularly from Bengal were strongly in favour of separate electorates.

Gandhi pointed out that he was inclined to concede the Muslim demand for 33½ per cent representation but since the Sikh Leaders also demanded one third representation in the Punjab, it was difficult to accept the Muslim League demand. The result was that the refusal to accept any amendments to the Nehru Report on the part of the Congress and Hindu

Leaders at the All Parties National Convention, united the different factions of Muslims in the All India Muslim Conference held in Delhi under the Presidentship of the Aga Khan on 1st January 1929.

A separate Muslim national feeling had by now grown almost to maturity. Saifuddin Kitchlew was among the section of Muslims which did not share the general view that a Hindu Muslim entente was impossible. Kitchlew believed in United Indian Nationalism. His worst enemies could not prove that he was a man without deep convictions or without the courage to espouse an unpopular cause. Men like Kitchlew, Ansari, Azad, Dr. Mahmud Hassan, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madni and Maulana Mohammad Ali could not be bought. Kitchlew embraced Indian Nationalism. He pronounced his faith in a joint Hindu Muslim nationalism in India which he thought was a prerequisite of winning Independence from Britain.

Kitchlew started a zealous Muslim and strengthened the foundations of Muslim nationalism, but after the demise of the Khilafat Movement he became an ardent supporter of a United nationalism and remained steadfast to it till the end. Kitchlew was a man of staunch character. He had love and affection not only for the Muslims but also for other communities living in India. His arguments were:

1) Our real enemy was British Imperialism and our only duty to defeat it; only a united action could achieve this.
2) Muslims left behind in India after separation would be at the mercy of the majority community. It could create unlimited communal problems.
3) Muslims would become weaker with the partition of India and would face severe hardships economically, politically and socially.
4) Division of India would create unlimited complications, particularly in the economic field. Foreign powers would take advantage of India's weak economy.

Saifuddin Kitchlew was a man of wit and ability. His learning was substantial, and his intellectual achievements were well known. When he spoke for India, his arguments were sharp and his knowledge deep. Thousands of Muslims admired him for his achievements. Kitchlew fulfilled the qualifications of a true nationalist Muslim and so rose in public esteem.

CHAPTER 7

INDIA OPTS FOR INDEPENDENCE

As India entered the second quarter of the twentieth century, it was no longer united in its stand except in one respect. All sections of the people agreed that British tutelage was no longer wanted. When the British Government spoke of a gradual transition towards Self-Government in India (the Simon Commission was set up in November 1927), Moti Lal Nehru told them: "We say we are absolutely fit for Self-Government, as fit as you are in your own Island. This is what we say." Speaking in the Central Legislature he sarcastically remarked, "Here we are occupying that position and you tell us as you tell school boys; be good boys and you will be promoted to a higher form."

Moti Lal Nehru was the Chairman and Jawahar Lal the Secretary of an All Parties Conference in which the leading politicians of the country drafted their own constitutional programme; their report, produced in 1928, demanded the same status for India as had been given to other British Dominions like Canada and Australia.

The annual session of the Indian National Congress was held that year end at Calcutta. Saifuddin Kitchlew who had already attended the sessions of the Congress at Bombay, Madras, Lahore, Karachi, Lucknow, Bangalore, Belgaum, Allahabad and Amritsar was the main focus of attention along with Subhash Bose at the Calcutta session.

Consideration of the Nehru Report was the main item on the agenda and provoked sharp division. Moti Lal Nehru wanted it to be accepted without controversy. But Kitchlew and Subhash Bose would not be reconciled to its moderate demand for a Government "in no event lower than that of any self-governing Dominion" and called for unqualified Independence and a complete break with Britain. Nehru Committee's report was accepted as its Dominion Status goal with a built-in one year ultimatum to Britain. If Dominion Status was not conceded to India within the year, there would be another non-violent campaign of disobedience to British Laws and authority.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was among the hard liners who wanted a complete Independence. To Kitchlew, who had worked so hard for the Complete Independence, this was a bitter disappointment.

Saifuddin Kitchlew did not believe in 'foreign help' to

oust the British. He was of the opinion that Indian freedom could only be attained through India's own efforts. According to him, "the history of nations that have attained their freedom tell us that self-reliance, self-sacrifice and sufferings are the only road to freedom."

Not everyone was inclined to agree with Gandhi's 'non-violent' approach to the problem. Punjab and Bengal, in particular, were the home of revolutionaries who believed in throwing the British out by force. The Government of India arrested 32 prominent trade unionists, among them the Leaders of the All India Trade Union Congress, on a charge of attempting to deprive the 'King Emperor' of his sovereignty over India, i.e. treason.

Almost all were sentenced to prison ranging from life terms to three years rigorous imprisonment. The sentences were reduced later under the pressure of the British Trade Union Congress and others.

The arrests were made in Bombay, Poona, Dacca and Allahabad on March 20th 1929 but the prisoners were taken to Meerut for trial in what came to be known as the 'Meerut Conspiracy Case'. Kitchlew was the most prominent member of the defence committee and defended the accused as a Barrister. He also sought to raise funds for the accused and used his foreign connections (Cambridge and Munster Universities) to secure outside sympathy and support.

Things were happening in Britain also. A Labour Government came to power in Britain for the first time in May 1929. The Viceroy, Lord Irwin, held consultations with the Labour Government and it was decided to remove the equivocations and ambiguities of the previous British declarations on the aims of Imperial policy in India.

In October 1929, on behalf of the British Government, Lord Irwin made the following declaration, "I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress is the attainment of Dominion Status."

When Irwin invited Indian Leaders to London for a Round Table Conference, a Leaders Conference to consider the offer was summoned in Delhi at the house of Vithal Bhai - Patel in November 1929. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Subhash - Chandra Bose and Saifuddin Kitchlew were among those present. Some Leaders proposed a joint manifesto which accepted the Viceroy's offer in principle subject to certain vital conditions. Inter alia, these stipulated that all discussions at the proposed Round Table Conference in London

should be on the basis of full Dominion Status. The manifesto was signed by Mahatma Gandhi, Moti Lal Nehru, Jawahar Lal - Nehru, Pundit Malaviya, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Moonjee, Sardar Patel, Sir Tej Bhadur Sapru, The Rt. Hon. V.S. Sastri, Mrs. Besant, Mrs. Naidu and others. Jawahar Lal Nehru did not at first agree with the other Leaders and intended issuing a contrary manifesto tegether with Dr. Kitchlew and Subhash Bose. But towards the end of the meeting, Mahatma Gandhi prevailed upon him to sign the Leaders' manifesto on the ground that he was President-elect of the Lahore Congress and the manifesto would lose much of its value if his signature did not appear on it.

Saifuddin Kitchlew was most unhappy over the declaration. He felt that to give up the demand for Independence was improper and dangerous, because in effect it suggested that the objective of Complete Independence was a mere bargaining counter, capable of being changed and whittled down to extract temporary advantages. He refused to sign the manifesto as also did Subhash Bose.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, Mr. Abdul Bari and Subhash - Bose issued a separate manifesto opposing the acceptance of Dominion Status and also the idea of participating in the so-called Round Table Conference. The manifesto pointed out that in a real Round Table Conference only the belligerent parties should be represented and the Indian representatives should be selected not by the British Government as had been intended, but by the Indian people. It also warned the Indian people that the Viceroy's pronouncement was a trap laid by the British Government. (It was reminiscent of a similar move made by the British Government some years ago in the case of Ireland when the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, suggested that an Irish convention consisting of all parties should be held for framing a constitution for Ireland - but the Sinn Fein Party were clever enough to see through the game and boycott the convention). The manifesto issued by Kitchlew, Subhash Bose and Mr. Abdul Bari was welcomed by left wing Congressmen and by the youth of the country in general.

Saifuddin Kitchlew did not like the idea of Gandhi's calling off the civil disobedience movement and accepting Dominion Status. He bitterly criticized the Leaders' manifesto and said, "No turning back once we get our feet onward. Let the slogan be onward, onward and onward until the goal is reached."

Even at the Calcutta Session in December 1928, Kitchlew and Subhash Bose had been in favour of Complete

Independence. Their companion in that stand was Jawahar - Lal Nehru himself who, ever since his return from his European tour, had been talking of 'Purna Swarajya' and Socialism as being the twin goals of the freedom movement. Now the time had come when the one year ultimatum given at Calcutta was about to expire. Jawahar Lal Nehru was designated to be President of the next annual session of the Indian National Congress to be held at Lahore, and Saifuddin Kitchlew was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Lahore Congress (44th Annual Session of the Indian National Congress).

There was nothing to prevent the Congress from proceeding with its objectives. Within a week some 300,000 people gathered on the banks of the river Ravi on the outskirts of Lahore where the Congress camp had been pitched. It was a dramatic affair by all accounts. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Jawahar Lal Nehru held the limelight. On the opening day, Kitchlew and Nehru both rode through the streets of Lahore on a white charger, surrounded by a detachment of the youth league and followed by a group of elephants. It was the crowning moment thus far, and vast crowds acclaimed them. Lahore City echoed with the slogans of 'Allah O' Akbar', 'Nehru Kitchlew Zindabad' (Long live Nehru and Kitchlew).

Nehru and Kitchlew made historic speeches before the crowd and a resolution declaring Complete Independence as the goal of the Congress was passed unanimously. Dr. Kitchlew seconded the Independence resolution moved by Nehru.

Kitchlew in his speech at the Lahore Congress said, "The future masters of the country are the peasants, tillers of the soil, labourers and workers. As long as India is deprived of its economic resources, it cannot progress." He continued, "What do we get under British domination? Poverty, unemployment, indebtedness, pestilence, disease, famine, starvation, death. The problem of our country, friends, is not religious or merely political. It is essentially economic. And we cannot bring about the economic salvation of our country without the sovereign control of its destinies in our hands."

An air of uncertainty hung over the Indian political scene as the Lahore Congress drew to a close on New Year's day of 1930. The declaration of war had been issued with much fanfare; Purna Swaraj (Complete Independence) had been proclaimed the party's goal; Civil disobedience was authorized; and all power was vested in Gandhi.

Gandhi suggested to the Viceroy they should concede eleven points, the substance of 'Purna Swaraj'; total prohibition; reduction of the sterling rupee; ratio from 1s 6d to 1s 4d; decrease of land revenue by at least 50 per cent; abolition of the salt tax; reduction of military expenditure; reduction of all Civil Servants' salaries; protection tariffs on foreign cloth; release of all political prisoners; passage of bill in favour of the Indian coastal shipping; abolition of the C.I.D. and conceding the right of Indians to carry arms.

Lord Irwin took no notice of these, and Gandhi began his campaign with a long march from village to village, an ideal method of attracting attention to his message throughout the country. He announced his intention to flout British authority by symbolically making salt at the sea shore, which was a Government monopoly.

On March 12 1930, Gandhi and seventy eight disciples including Saifuddin Kitchlew set out for the sea. Day by day tension mounted, as All India followed the Mahatma. Along the route Gandhi preached the message of non-violence, an article of absolute faith throughout his life. Everywhere he was greeted as a saint. Three hundred village headmen resigned their posts to register their support of Civil disobedience. In the meantime, the Congress made preparations for the anticipated widespread arrests once mass civil disobedience got under way. The All India Congress Committee delegated special powers to its President to act for the committee if necessary to nominate replacements to the Working Committee as a successor in case of arrest.

Gandhi reached the sea on the morning of 5th April. He paused for prayers and then proceeded to break the law by picking up salt lying on the shore. The spark having been ignited in a dramatic fashion, the explosion followed with devastating effect. The pent up emotions of thousands burst forth, and a nation-wide violation of the salt law followed. Giant public meetings were held in the major cities, with Congress Leaders preaching the immorality of the State monopoly over the production of salt, symbolic of the evil character of the British Raj generally. The word salt had acquired a magic power. An amusing feature of the mass response was the practice of purchasing salt themselves and then, in defiance of the law, boiling it in a public place for the police to see.

By far the most dramatic event of 1930 took place in Peshawar, capital of India's North West Frontier Province, homeland of the tribesmen. A big clash occurred on the

23rd April when a procession was organized in the main street of the town to protest against the government's decision to prohibit the entry of an All India Congress Committee team which included Saifuddin Kitchlew.

In the Police firing that followed, thirty people were killed and thirty three wounded, according to official estimates.

Kitchlew in a joint statement with other members of the Committee condemned the 'insane act'. Congress sources estimated the figures at about 200 killed.

The Peshawar episode caused grave concern among Senior Officials for it witnessed the emergence of Congress power in the Frontier area, the historic invasion route from Central Asia. Even more dangerous was the refusal of two platoons of the second battalion, 18th Royal Garhwali Rifles, to fire on the unarmed crowd. Although an isolated incident, it revived memories of the rebellion of 1857.

Gandhi was arrested near Poona on 5th May. No trial was held. Gandhi's arrest led to demonstrations in every major city of India. In Bombay the reaction was swift and sharp. Some 50,000 workers walked off their jobs and Hindu cloth merchants proclaimed a six day hartal (suspension of all business). There was a complete boycott of foreign cloth. From the specific attack on the salt law, the campaign developed into a general onslaught on British rule. The Government responded with mass arrests estimated at 60,000 before the year was out.

Early in June the Viceroy informed the Secretary of State in London, "All thinking Indians deeply resent the racial inferiority with which they consider we regard them, and they passionately want substantial advance which will give them power to manage their own affairs . . . .I think every European and Indian would tell you that he was surprised at the dimensions the movement had assumed. I certainly am myself and we should delude ourselves if we sought to underrate it." As for the breakdown by groups, Lord Irwin divided the support as follows:-
Communist and Revolutionary 5 per cent; Gandhi and sincere Congress adherents 30 per cent; General sympathisers 50 per cent and Commercial and economic discontent 15 per cent.

Lord Irwin continued, "The situation is extremely grave. If you circulate this telegram to the Cabinet," concluded the Viceroy, "I hope you will impress upon the necessity of utter secrecy. The damage of any disclosure cannot be exaggerated."

The Simon Commission report was published in 1930.

Immediately after Gandhi's arrest the principal Leaders of the Congress like Nehru, Kitchlew and Azad were arrested.

CHAPTER 8

FRUSTRATION AND DISILLUSIONMENT

The first Round Table Conference was held in London in the autumn of 1930 without the participation of the Congress. It was like playing 'Hamlet' without the Prince of Denmark. Lord Irwin, of course, saw the absurdity of the situation and pointed it out to the Home Government. Consequently Gandhi was released at the end of January 1931 and had long talks with the Viceroy commencing February 17. The result was an agreement for the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement, release of the political prisoners held by the Government and a promise of Congress participation in the Round Table Conference when it resumed for a second session in London.

After the Delhi Pact, as the truce came to be known, Kitchlew and thousands of other Congressmen were released. It remained now for the Congress as a whole to ratify the truce. The British Government very hamhandedly queered the pitch by surreptitiously executing Bhagat Singh, revolutionary hero of the Punjab, on March 23rd despite Gandhi's plea to the Viceroy. Following the hanging there were demonstrations in all major cities of India and a walk out by Indian members of the Central Assembly.

Indignation ran high. Kitchlew expressed the prevalent mood when he said in a statement, "The corpse of Bhagat Singh shall stand between us and England."

Despite the circumstances, there was no real threat to the truce at that time. Gandhi persuaded a reluctant Nehru to move the resolution on the 'Delhi Pact' in the open session of the Indian National Congress which convened in Karachi with Sardar Patel as President. Saifuddin Kitchlew deplored the acceptance of any basis for discussion with the Government save Complete Independence. Kitchlew was distressed beyond measure, and his grief and embitterment found vent in tears. Kitchlew had never been happy over the truce. He opposed the resolution but after Gandhi and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had spoken, the resolution was passed.

As a sop to the dissidents, led by Kitchlew, the resolution reiterated the goal of 'Purna Swaraj' and spelled this out to mean control of the defence forces, external affairs, finance, fiscal and economic policy, as well as the right to secede from the Empire, and impartial scrutiny of all British financial claims on India.

The Congress delegation to the Round Table Conference

(the resolution said) would be free to accept such adjustments as might be demonstrably necessary in the interests of India. Gandhi was given 'Carte blanche' to interpret this as the sole Congress representative to the conference.

This was a period of stress and soul searching for Saifuddin Kitchlew. He was now a mature 43 and had held highest office in the Indian National Congress. He had been to jail several times and sacrificed a flourishing law practice and the affection of a devoted family, for the cause of freedom.

What was more important was his temperamental incompatibility with some of the Gandhian tactical moves. He had been a man of action and steadfast straightforwardness all his life. He did not relish what others called 'tactical retreats'. He was all for Complete Independence and continuous struggle and did not like compromises like Dominion Status and the Delhi Pact. He was puzzled and annoyed at the turn of events. Every Punjabi was sore about Bhagat Singh's execution; yet Gandhi was agreeing to attend the Round Table Conference to discuss Dominion Status even after the Independence pledge of 1929-30.

As it turned out, the British Politicians kept Gandhi and the Congress busy with two more sessions of the Round Table Conference right up to 1932, though Gandhi attended only the second Round Table Conference in November-December 1931, after which he withdrew.

Kitchlew also did not relish Churchill calling Gandhi a 'naked Faqir' (beggar) when he was guest of the British Monarch at Buckingham Palace.

Kitchlew therefore spent the greater part of his time during 1931-33 at Amritsar, in the midst of his family and friends. His grandson, the present author, was also born on the 15th August 1931, at Amritsar. Kitchlew's household had always been full of guests, dinners and parties; off and on Kitchlew took time to play with all the children of the family. Occasionally of an evening as Kitchlew sat talking with his friends, I would peep from behind a curtain, trying to take in the flow of conversation and laughter. I was tremendously impressed by his robust talk, his great echoing laugh, his vitality, strength and magnetism. I thought him clever and full of courage. Now and then grandfather would pull me into the room and seat me on his knee. When I grew a little older, I attended public meetings at Amritsar with him and took interest in listening to the songs sung by his followers in praise of grandfather. It gave me a great enthusiasm and interest in these affairs which I carried on until my departure for

England.

The next result of the Round Table Conference was that Ramsay Macdonald, the British Prime Minister, threw the entire blame for lack of constitutional advance on the Indian politicians and their inability to agree among themselves.

On August 16th, 1932, he announced his communal award which created separate electorates for various communities and groups.

Saifuddin Kitchlew like most other men of nationalist convictions shrank back in despair from this award. He was dismayed when Gandhi announced a 'fast unto death' on the limited ground that the award placed the untouchables outside the fold of Hinduism. Here was a man who had expanded the scope of the Khilafat Issue, a community's interest, to make it a national issue; yet now he was reducing a national issue to the dimensions of a parochial one.

Mahatma Gandhi began his 21 day fast for 'Self-Purification' on 8th May 1932. Kitchlew was appalled by the seeming reversion to the primitive. Rational minds rebelled at Gandhi's strange tactics.

The first day of fast, 8th May 1932, marked the end of the Civil Disobedience campaign on the grounds that the fast was in no sense a political act, the Government released Gandhi unconditionally. He reciprocated by recommending that the campaign be suspended for six weeks, and called for the release of all remaining Civil Disobedience prisoners, estimated at about 9,000 including the Congress Leaders. The result of the fast was a compromise by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (Leader of the untouchables) and later to be one of the main architects of free India's Republican Constitution of 1950. This was called the Poona Pact of September 1932.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was nominated President of the All India Congress in January 1932 by Sardar Patel and remained in office until the end of 1933.

CHAPTER 9

PRACTICAL POLITICS

If Saifuddin Kitchlew was unhappy with the patchwork which resulted from the Round Table Conferences, he was in good company. It resulted in what was described by Jawahar Lal Nehru and his young group of Congressites as a 'Satanic' Constitution, but not before an equally dissatisfied Churchill and his right wing of the Conservative Party in Britain itself had fought a delaying action for two full years.

The Government of India Act was finally passed only on the 2nd August 1935.

The two main features in the Act which persuaded Kitchlew and the Congress generally to give it a trial were a promise of 'autonomy' for the Provincial Governments and the fact that it enfranchised at least 30 million Indians, even if that was but a tenth of the total population. The electorates went to the polls in 1936. On the eve of the election campaign, there arose the question of choosing a Congress President to lead the Party during the coming year. Kitchlew stated that he would welcome the election of any of his Colleagues and would extend his complete co-operation. His friend Jawahar Lal Nehru was elected for the second time. In an outspoken Presidential address on April 12, 1936 he spelt out a radical Socialistic programme which nearly split the Working Committee. However, as the date of Provincial elections drew near, Congress Leaders closed ranks.

With Gandhi's backing, Kitchlew (co-author with Jawahar Lal) was able to secure approval for a left-of-centre election manifesto. There were pledges to remove all social, economic and political discrimination against women; to encourage 'Khaddar' (home spun) cloth; to secure better treatment for political prisoners; to give industrial workers improved conditions; to struggle for the oft-stated Congress goal of Complete Independence and abolition of untouchability etc. The most striking feature of the manifesto was its special appeal to peasantry in the form of a pledge to sponsor substantial agrarian reforms; immediate relief to the poor peasants by a reduction of rent and land taxes; exemption of uneconomic holdings from all rent and taxes; a moratorium on debts; the scaling down of rural indebtedness; and the provision of cheap credit facilities.

Kitchlew contested the election as an Independent Candidate for the Punjab Legislative Assembly from Amritsar

- his home town. There were two other candidates, namely Sheikh Mohammad Sadiq Bar-at-Law and Chaudhry Afzal - Haque; they fought the election on behalf of the Muslim League and Ahrars respectively. Kitchlew who had always been very popular in Amritsar since the Jallianwala Bagh incident, had no difficulty in obtaining a massive majority of 10,000 votes over the rival candidates.

It is interesting to note that during this bout of Legislative Assembly election, Kitchlew formed an organisation called 'Allah Wali Fauj,' (God's Army) in Amritsar. Mammoth processions paraded through the streets raising slogans of 'Allah Wali Fauj' and 'Kitchlew Zindabad'. The slogan of Allah Wali Fauj proved extremely effective in the campaign and recalled memories of similar organizing skill (many must have called it gimmickry) which Kitchlew had shown even in his earliest political activities.

Kitchlew was a practical politician and master of the numerous details which got into a successful political life.

During 1918, for example in Amritsar, there had been trouble in the local body elections, rival candidates having organized groups of 'Badmashes' (hooligans) who fought each other in the streets. Serious trouble broke out at the Amritsar Railway Station. An agitation known as Platform Ticket agitation became very popular in Amritsar. During this agitation Kitchlew became extremely popular among the masses. Saifuddin Kitchlew made a number of speeches in Amritsar and blamed it all on the British and said the Indians were not being treated like human beings. This stirred the emotions of the people in Amritsar and a faction fight was channelled into patriotic effort. Kitchlew also asked for a complete boycott of the railways. An angry crowd, headed by two of Kitchlew's most faithful supporters, named Bugga and Ratto, demonstrated outside the railway station. Some skirmishes with the police occurred and a few arrests were made.

Kitchlew became known as a popular champion in this agitation. People accepted Kitchlew's orders blindly. Shortly after this agitation Kitchlew formed a local committee in support of Gandhi's satyagraha. The wildest rumours had been circulating in the city of Amritsar to the effect that no more than four people would be allowed to assemble anywhere, that there would be a tax levied on every marriage, and the Government would collect its revenues in kind, by taking half of all agricultural produce.

The Amritsar newspaper 'Waqat' run by Durga Das

carried a cartoon of the Secretary of State (Montague) handing Mother India a charter of freedom, while Mr. Justice Rowlatt opened a basket to release a Cobra which bit her. The paper stated, 'India cannot and will not accept the mark of Cain on her forehead and be shamed among the people of the earth.'

In those days also, a 'Dunda Fauj' (bludgeon army) had been formed by the people of Amritsar which marched through the streets in organized files, carrying 'lathis' (staves) at the slope like rifles. A number of posters of the 'Dunda Fauj' were issued, all anti British. One of them read, "We are the Indian nation, whose bravery and honour have been acknowledged by all the Kings of the World. The English are the worst lot. Gird up your loins brethren and fight. Do not lose courage and try your utmost to turn those mean monkeys out of your holy city. Thus desires Kitchlew."

Another 'Dunda Fauj' poster said, "The Dunda Fauj of Amritsar has bravely fought the Europeans and their Sikh regiments have revolted. Brethren, Hindus, Sikhs and Mohammdans, enlist at once in the Dunda Fauj and fight bravely against the British. God will grant you victory. Thus desires Kitchlew."

Kitchlew's followers also brought out a clandestine newpaper under the name of 'Dunda Akhbar'. Its aim was to communicate messages to the masses as to what to do and what not to do. Due to strict restrictions by the Government that was the only way to communicate with the public. On 10th April 1919, for example the 'Dunda Akhbar' proclaimed, "Hindu, Mohammdan and Sikh Brothers, enlist at once in the Dunda Fauj and fight with bravery against the British. God will grant you victory. Conquer the English. Stop dealing with English. Close all offices and workshops. Fight on. Thus desires Kitchlew."

It was the appeal to personal loyalty which marked Kitchlew's political style. At all critical junctures, his personal followers rose to the occasion with him in every risky situation. He sent orders to his supporters in Amritsar through his ardent followers like Bugga and Ratto and in turn treated them like members of his own family.

Also intimately and personally associated with Kitchlew was a devoted and faithful valet, Abdul Wahid, who had been adopted by the family in his childhood. Abdul Wahid always accompanied Kitchlew to his public meetings and Congress sessions. Wahid was born at Amritsar, the son of poor parents. His mother used to be maid at Kitchlew's house in Amritsar. It was then Kitchlew and his wife had adopted him as a young

child, not that Kitchlew did not have his own children, but to help a poor family which had been devoted and loyal.

It has often been said that behind every successful man is a devoted and inspiring woman. Kitchlew's wife was one such. Sadat Bano had been brought up in a strict orthodox home but as India's struggle for Independence became more and more intense, the Kitchlew way of life changed drastically. All the resources of the household and family were devoted to the cause of free India, and Sadat Bano too was drawn into the Independence movement. Throughout her husband's years of imprisonment and heartbreaking sacrifices, she and her family continued to live for their beliefs.

Sadat Bano served the wounded at her house and looked after the families of Kitchlew's faithful supporters including Bugga and Ratto. She bought food, clothing and medicines and distributed these among those who were wounded in the frequent demonstrations against the British. In spite of all this she was intensely feminine. She had a special interest in jewellery. She spent hours with jewellers selecting necklaces, rings, ear-rings and bangles. She had an interest also in serious reading which she kept alive till her last moments. She took particular interest in Minto's short stories.

Sadat Bano seldom missed a wedding of her relations whether they were in India or Pakistan. On all these occasions she was the major attraction in female gatherings.

After her husband's death in 1963, Sadat Bano lived a lonely life in New Delhi. She preferred to stay on in Delhi in spite of the fact that her daughters and relations were in Pakistan. Like Kitchlew she was proud, wilful and high-spirited. But she was warm hearted and affectionate in the company of friends and intimates. Sadat Bano, who had sacrificed everything, even the company of her family and relations, for the sake of love and devotion for her late husband, fell ill in the summer of 1970 and died in New Delhi. She died peacefully and was buried near her husband's grave in Jamia Millia Delhi.

CHAPTER 10

IN AND OUT OF JAIL

The Congress Leaders had been cogitating till the last moment whether to contest the 1936-37 elections or to boycott the functioning of the Government of India Act of 1935. As it turned out the results of the elections gave them clear majorities in five provinces; they formed the biggest group in the legislatures. In the remaining three Provinces, they were in majority.

Even now there arose a debate whether to utilise their victories to form governments or to boycott the legislatures and wreck the new Constitution Act.

Saifuddin Kitchlew was of the opinion that the Congress should boycott the elections and on no account should Congressmen take office. He expressed the views in a speech at the Lucknow Session. Kitchlew very clearly indicated that it was a humiliating position which self respect itself should prevent one from accepting. For the national organization to be party to it was to give up the very basis and background of its existence.

By March 1937, the Congress Party had decided to accept office but got involved in a dispute over the meaning of autonomy - they took it to mean absolutely no interference by the Governors - and it was only in July that Congress Ministers took over in eight provinces, only to resign in September 1939 when the Viceroy took India into the Second World War without consulting them.

Kitchlew was by now an elder politician who could stand aloof from the turmoil and give his mature advice.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah was at this time propounding the doctrine that his Muslim League was the sole representative organization of the Muslims of India. Nehru put the implications of this doctrine thus: "There are large numbers of Muslims in the Congress itself and among our highest Executives. To admit Mr. Jinnah's claim means in effect to push our old Muslim Colleagues from the Congress . . . . that is inconceivable for us."

Kitchlew was embarrassed by the wide acceptance that Mr. Jinnah's view was beginning to find in his native Punjab though not in Kashmir. He soft-pedalled politics and devoted more attention to his law practice at the Lahore High Court and to his family, which now consisted of five sons and five daughters. The sons, Talat, Khalid, and Mansoor were students

studying at the Amritsar Cambridge High School and his daughters Zubeida, Sadaquat and Rafat were at the Stratford College for women at Amritsar. Zahida, Azra and Taufiq were too young at this time. Whenever Kitchlew went to Lahore from his home at Amritsar for a court case, members of his family went with him and stayed with their relations at their friend's house at Temple Road, Lahore. Kitchlew had his devoted friends such as Malick Barkat Ali, Inder Dev Dua, Khalifa Shujah Uddin, Syed Mohsin Shah and Maulvi Ghulam - Mohyuddin Kasuri, residing in that locality.

In March, 1939, at the age of eight, I remember most joyful days when I accompanied my father to Lahore. Once with my sister and elder brother Rauf, we went to attend the 'Mela Chiraghan', a colourful Muslim festival, which is usually celebrated ten miles out of Lahore. 'Mela Chiraghan' means a festival of lights (illuminations). Thousands of lamps are placed on the walls of Shalamar Gardens built by the Moghul Emperors. Thousands of people fill the night with folk music and country dances. Truly magic moments of the East bring rope tricks, snake charmers, hypnotic spells of the magicians and magnificent fireworks. Next day father showed us the sights of the historic city of Lahore. In spite of the fact that Kitchlew devoted more time to his Law practice, yet still the humdrum activities of politics were going on.

Kitchlew stayed for a few months at our house in Dhab Khatikan, Amritsar. I well remember that large sections of his followers would come and stay with him till late at night. My mother, Iqbal, was the favourite of Kitchlew. She served him and looked after him to the best of her ability. Sometimes Kitchlew would come just after midnight or early in the morning after attending public meetings. She would get up at once and get coffee and food ready for Kitchlew and his political workers. She worked hard during his stay at our house. She sometimes cooked meals for fifty or sixty people who attended Kitchlew's meetings. It is interesting to note that my mother had to arrange a number of dishes for the guests as they used to be mixed gatherings, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Kitchlew would come to the top floor of the house to see my mother and would thank her warmly.

When the Second World War broke out on September 3rd 1939, it was the end of an idyllic period for us. To Saifuddin Kitchlew it portended a recall to the arena of political strife, because the Viceroy's action in declaring India at war without any consultation with the National elected Leadership deeply offended the Congress. Ministries were

ordered to resign in October. The Unionist Party in Punjab led by Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, of course, continued in office, as also did the Ministries in Sind and Bengal.

On September 14th 1939, the Congress Working Committee adopted a resolution asking for a 'clear declaration .... pledging the Government to the ending of Imperialism and Fascism alike .... and .... to give immediate effect to it the largest possible extent ....'

In March 1940,the Muslim League held a Session at Lahore and passed the historic resolution proclaiming the achievement of a separate State of Pakistan as its aim. Had there been a more imaginative Viceroy in Delhi and a more responsive Government in London, history might well have taken a different turn. But Lord Linlithgow, well intentioned though he was, was incapable of adopting the bold far-sighted view. In London, Mr. L.S. Amery had replaced Lord Zetland as Secretary of State for India. Although mentally more resilient and robust than his predecessor, he was unable to mellow Churchill's uncompromising attitude to India. Churchill once said, "Sooner or later you will have to crush Gandhi and the Indian Congress and all they stand for." The British Premier was a resolute opponent of Indian freedom.

On August 8th 1940, Lord Linlithgow disclosed the British Government's reaction to the Congress and Muslim League resolutions. The Viceroy would invite certain representatives to form a war advisory Council. But the issue of Independence would be decided only after the war.

On the Viceroy's declaration, Kitchlew remarked, "In this World of war and conflict we may not escape the price of freedom. To expect otherwise is to delude oneself. The future will ultimately depend on the strength of the Indian people."

Nehru also commented in the same way and wrote to the Viceroy, "I am sorry, for in spite of my hostility to British Imperialism and all Imperialisms, I have loved much that was England, and I should have linked the silken bonds of the spirit between India and England. Those bonds can only exist in freedom. I wanted India's freedom for India's sake, of course; but I also wanted it for England's sake. That hope is shattered and fate seems to have fashioned a different future for us; the hundred years of hostility will remain and grow in future conflicts and the breach, when it comes, as come it must, will also not be in friendship, but in hostility."

Having been rebuffed by the British Government, the Congress realized that it could no longer remain passive. On August 18th, the Working Committee meeting at Wardha

placed on its records that, "the rejection of the Congress proposals is a proof of the British Government's determination to continue to hold India by the sword." A month later, presiding over the All India Congress meeting at Bombay, Maulana Azad declared that the Viceroy's offer was 'not worth looking at'. The Committee later passed a resolution affirming its belief in non-violence and declaring its intention to persuade the Indian people to dissociate themselves from the war 'in a non-violent way.'

On October 17, 1940, Vinoba Bhave inaugurated the individual Satyagraha campaign by delivering an anti-war speech at a small village a few miles from Wardha in the Central Provinces. He was arrested four days later and sentenced to three months imprisonment. The campaign was to be carried on through various defined stages, spanning a little over a year, and in the process some 30,000 men and women were to be jailed. It had been arranged that Kitchlew should offer individual Satyagraha from November in the Punjab. But the authorities anticipated events by arresting him at the end of October.

By the end of the year 1940, eleven members of the Congress Working Committee, 29 former Ministers and over 400 members of the Central and Provincial legislatures were arrested.

The fall of Burma in 1942 cut the direct supply route from India to China, and India became the keystone of Allied defence in the Indian Ocean while remaining a reservoir of manpower and war materials for the democratic forces in the near and far East. Three days after the surrender of Rangoon on March 11, 1942, Churchill announced that the British Government had decided to send Sir Stafford Cripps to India with a plan which the War Cabinet had approved. It would be Sir Stafford Cripps' mission to ascertain whether the plan would secure a 'reasonable and practical' measure of acceptance and 'thus promote the concentration of all Indian thought and energies on the war against Japan. Cripps was well known to Indian Leaders. He had visited India in 1939 to canvass the prospects for a tour by an all Party British Parliamentry delegation in India. Congress Leaders respected his integrity and ability.

After his release, Kitchlew moved to Lahore and resided at the Temple Road, the locality of the Leading Lawyers and Barristers. On Cripps' arrival in India, Kitchlew went to Delhi and had a series of consultations and meetings with personal friends like Asaf Ali, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai and

other Congress Leaders.

To quote Khalifa Shujahuddin, the former Speaker of the Punjab Assembly, "Kitchlew has always been of strong opinion in favour of Complete Independence. He does not take much interest in the promise of Dominion Status." He came back to Lahore and devoted himself again to Law practice at the Lahore High Court.

Cripps, who at that time was Leader of the House of Commons, had returned earlier in the year from Russia, when he had functioned as Britain's Ambassador in a dramatic if unorthodox manner. His political prestige was high. If anybody could convince the Congress Leaders of the British Government's intentions, he was the man. Yet, the Cripps mission laboured under several limitations, some of them serious. He would be negotiating with the Indian Leaders, not alongside the Viceroy, but independently of him, and it was well known that Lord Linlithgow resented his exclusion. Sir - Stafford arrived in New Delhi on March 22nd and his mission was over on April 11th.

An obvious major limitation in the scheme he revealed on March 30th was that it represented a compromise between the Congress dream of unified India and the Muslim League's demand for a partitioned India. As far as the future was concerned, the War Cabinet pledged itself to grant Dominion Status at the end of the war and suggested that an Indian Constituent Assembly should itself then frame the constitution.

Early in May, Gandhi writing in the columns of the 'Harijan' invited the British to withdraw from India saying that the Cripps offer was a cheque on a failing bank. On August 8th 1942, Congress passed a resolution incorporating his views.

The 'Quit India' resolution contained an offer and a challenge. "On the declaration of India's Independence a provincial Government will be formed and a free India will become an ally of the United Nations." Failing this Congress would launch a Civil disobedience movement to oust the British authority.

The Government reacted within a few hours. On the morning of the 9th August 1942, Gandhi and all the members of the Working Committee were arrested.

The arrest of the Congress Leaders set off a nationwide political explosion, the climax to the whole drama. As the news spread over the land, the rank and file rose in fury against the Government. There was no need of Directors and planning. Congressmen and their sympathisers were

galvanized into immediate and spontaneous action. For more than a week business life was paralysed in Allahabad, Ahmedabad, Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Amritsar and Bangalore. In almost every major city mass demonstrations mushroomed from the Bazaars. Students and workers, shopkeepers and housewives, marched throught the streets singing nationalist songs and demanding the release of Political Leaders. They were peaceful at first but tension was great and the authorities were nervous. In Delhi the police fired on 47 separate occasions. In U.P. they fired 29 times killing 76 people and severely injuring 114. In Calcutta serious demonstrations began on 13th August. In the Central Provinces the police killed 64, wounded 102 and arrested 1088 in the first two weeks. The pattern was the same everywhere . . . . protest meetings, police violence and arrests.

The students were in the vanguard. They walked out of the schools and the universities and started a campaign in full swing. Violence bred violence. In U.P. three police stations were burnt, four post offices razed to the ground and seventy nine village records totally destroyed. In the State of Mysore, 32,000 workers remained on strike for two weeks while 90 per cent of all University students walked out.

Everywhere Government repression was harsh, for this was the gravest threat to British rule since the rebellion of 1857. According to the Secretary of State for India, the casualties from 9th August to 30th November were about 2,000 killed and 4,000 injured. About 100,000 nationalists were imprisoned.

The Chief Secretary of Bengal reported on September 2nd, "All sections of Indian opinion may be said to be at one in support of the demand for the immediate transference of power and the establishment of a national government."

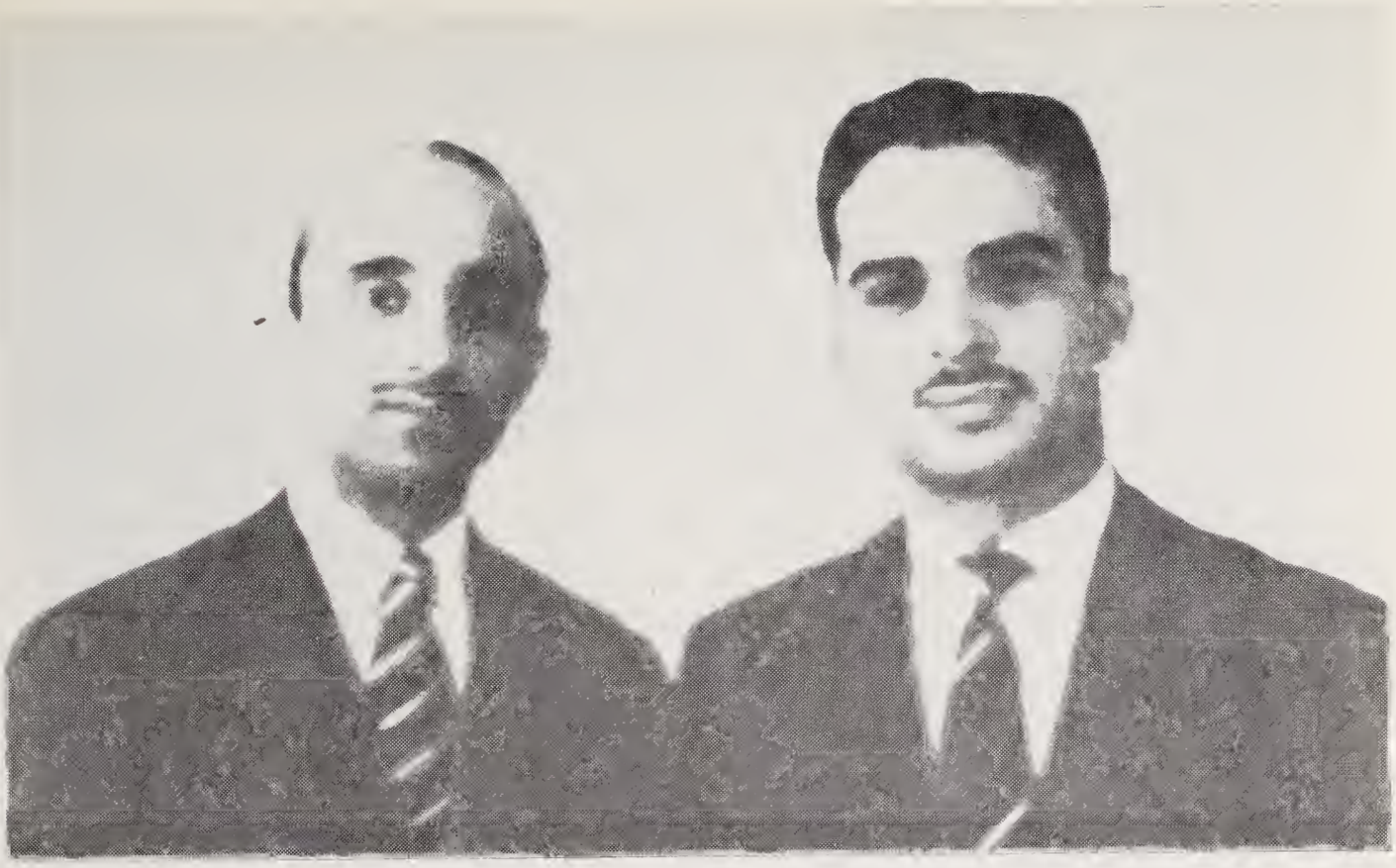
The August movement became a legend, the last open challenge to British rule. Five years later Independence came . . . . without the need of another round of civil disobedience.

The most stimulating of Kitchlew's companions in jail were Jawahar Lal Nehru, Maulana Azad, doyen of the nationalist Muslims, a renowned Islamic Scholar and a political comrade for 20 years, Acharya Narendra Dev, gentle scholar and humanist, Subhash Bose, left winger colleague and Asaf Ali, India's first Ambassador to the United States, fastidious to a fault, with an alert mind and a lawyer's outlook. Another very close colleague was Dr. Sayyed Mahmud, an

associate since the early 1920's.

From all accounts Kitchlew was as usual a model prisoner and companion. According to Subhash Bose, "Kitchlew adjusted very well to his surroundings. His presence brightened the gloomy atmosphere, as did his varied interests in sport. Kitchlew was utterly devoted to his comrades. Kitchlew had a passion for order and cleanliness, meticulous in the extreme, and was a model of tolerance in political discussion."

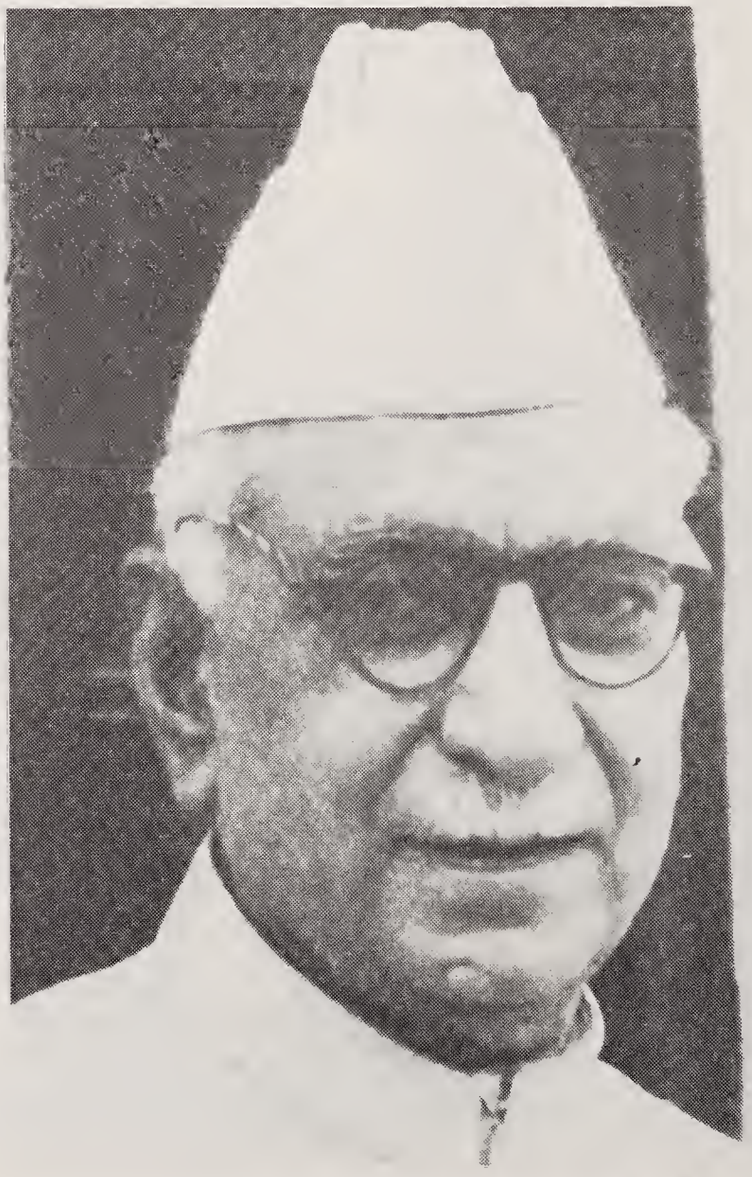
While grandfather was in jail, I spent most of the time at the famous M.A.O. High School learning English, mathematics, history and Persian. Although father had arranged for private tuition at home, we all, brothers and sisters alike, learnt Persian from our maternal grandfather, Khwaja Ghulam Mohy Uddin, a powerful civil lawyer and a scholar in Persian. The lessons in English were given by our maternal Uncle Kh. Said Uddin, an outstanding criminal lawyer in Jhelum. Grandfather, whenever he was out of prison, created a lot of interest by telling us educational stories. When he was jailed, I started writing letters to him and to my friends and relations. This was at the age of twelve.



KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN
AND THE AUTHOR

THE RT. HON. H. MACMILLAN
AND LADY DOROTHY AT
BIRCH GROVE HOUSE

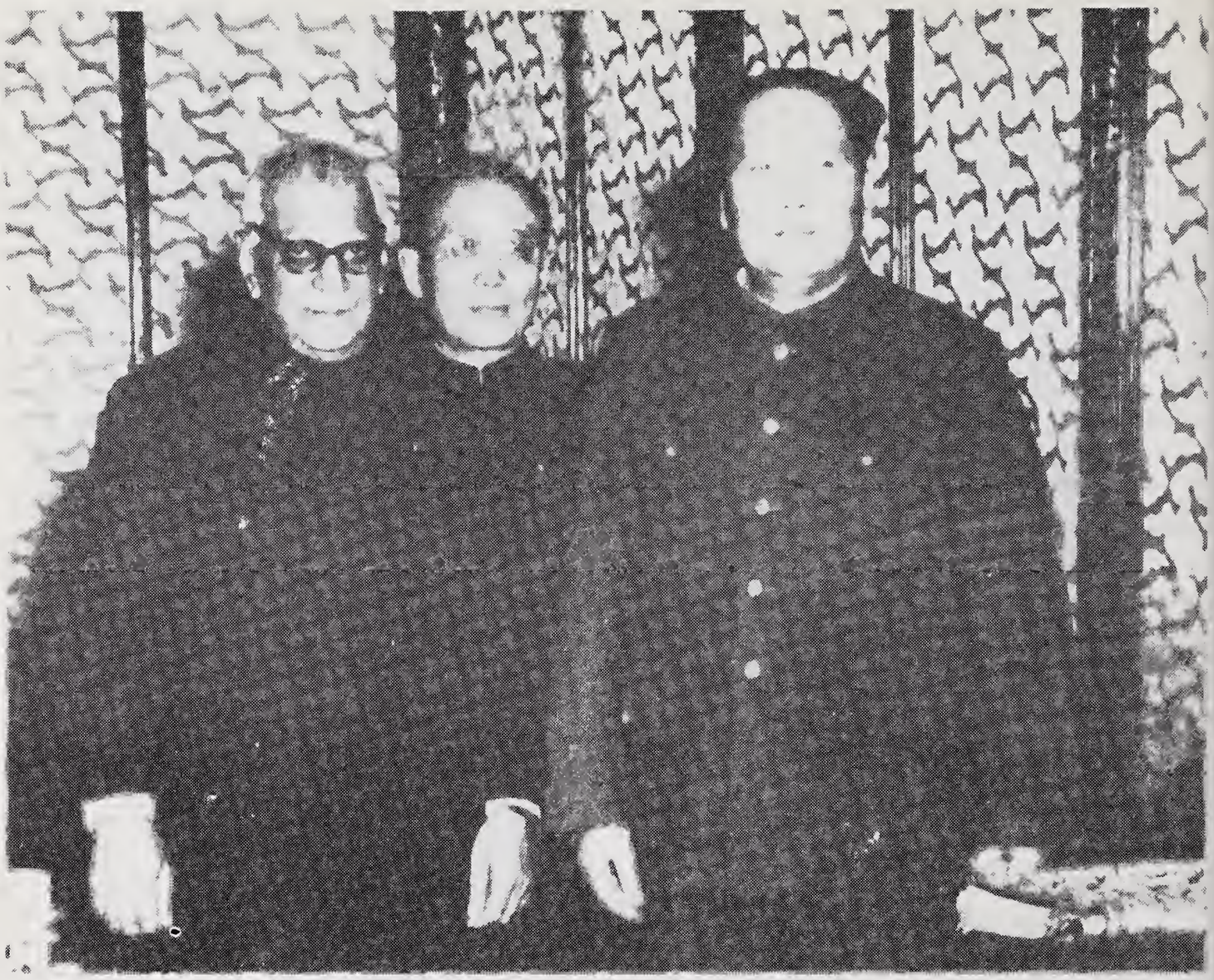
DR. SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW
WITH CHILDREN IN RUSSIA



DR. SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW
FREEDOM FIGHTER

THE KHILAFAT LEADERS LEFT TO RIGHT:
MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI, SHANKARACHARYA
OF THE SHARADA PITH, MAULANA MOHAMMAD ALI
AND DR. SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW AT THE
FAMOUS KARACHI TRIAL.

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE
DR. SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW



DR. S. KITCHLEW WITH
CHAIRMAN MAO TSE TUNG AND
KUO MO JO IN PEKING.

GANDHI. THE CONGRESS PRESIDENT
AT THE ANNUAL SESSION MUSLIM
LEAGUE. DEC 31, 1924.

CHAPTER 11

END OF A WAR

Towards the middle of 1944, it became clear that the Second World War would end in victory for the British and their allies. The Government of India decided to release the Congress Leaders and make another attempt to hammer out a political compromise. Field Marshal Lord Wavell was appointed Viceroy of India to set the ball rolling and, if possible, to secure Indian nationalist co-operation for the Coup-de-grace to the fascist axis of Germany, Italy and Japan.

As a professional soldier, Lord Wavell appreciated the role India could play. He was aware also of the temper of the Country. He placed these considerations before the British Government in the spring of 1945 and was called to England for ten weeks of consultations.

On 14th June after he returned to Delhi proposals were announced for constitutional changes in India.

The Viceroy's executive council would be reconstituted, with only Indian members except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief. The Muslim League was offered an even greater prize .... parity with the Hindus in the Council. To consider the proposals, 21 persons were invited to a Conference at Simla. These included eleven Provincial premiers, Leaders of the Congress and the League, one delegate each for the untouchables and the Sikhs; and Gandhi and Jinnah as the recognized Leaders of the two main parties.

Optimism prevailed at the outset of the Conference, but this rapidly gave way to frustration. Stripped of the facade of multi-party and communal representation (for it was really a contest between the Congress and the League) the fate of the 1945 Simla Conference hung on one issue. The League insisted on the right to appoint all Muslim members of the Executive Council, and the Congress refused to abdicate its status as a national organization, insisting that it would nominate some Muslims too. Conversations took place between Jinnah and Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant but the deadlock remained. Wavell himself then tried to mediate but in vain. The Conference failed. Meanwhile a Labour Government took office in Britain in July 1945. On 21st August, the Viceroy was recalled to London for a fresh examination of the 'entire Indian problem.'

It was announced simultaneously that General elections to the Central and Provincial legislatures in India would be

held in the winter. Before another month had passed Wavell returned to Delhi and a new policy statement appeared; provincial autonomy would be restored immediately after the elections, a constitution-making body for India would be established as soon as possible; and the Viceroy's Executive Council would be reconstituted with representatives of the principal Indian parties.

The result of the ensuing elections were astonishing to Hindus and the British Government. The Muslim League won all the 30 seats reserved for Muslims in the Central Assembly (securing 80 per cent of the Muslim vote and 427 of the 507 Muslim seats in the Provincial Legislatures (with 74 per cent of the Muslim votes). Its only set-back was in the North West Frontier Province where the Congress supported 'Red Shirt Movement' of the Khan Brothers was quite active. Khan - Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib captured a clear majority. Most of the general seats were won by the Congress, 56 in the Central Assembly (91 per cent of the general votes) and 930 in the provinces.

But Kitchlew's heart was not in these matters. He spent the winter of 1945-46 in fighting for a very emotional cause, viz, the release of the brave young men and women who had fought the war of the Indian Independence from the losing side . . . . in collaboration with the Axis Powers.

They were members of the Indian National Army which had been organized in South East Asia by Subhash Chandra - Bose, one time colleague of Saifuddin Kitchlew. Subhash Bose, one of the more radical Leaders, was elected President of the Indian National Congress in 1939 at the young age of 44. He was forced to resign by the 'timid' policies of Mahatma Gandhi who had opposed Bose's election to the Presidentship of the Congress.

In January 1941, Bose escaped from prison and found his way to Germany and later to Japan. He died in an air crash in the last days of the war in 1945.

After the war, the British Government in India put a number of Indian National Army Officers on trial. The Congress set up an I.N.A. defence committee consisting of some of the ablest lawyers of the Country including Bhulabhai Desai, Sir Tej Bhadur Sapru, Asaf Ali, Saifuddin - Kitchlew, Jawahar Lal Nehru and Dr. Katju.

The main legal battle took place at the Red Fort in Delhi where Major General Shah Nawaz (a Muslim) Col. Dhillon (a Sikh) and Captain Sehgal (a Hindu) were put on trial together for waging war against the King Emperor.

Dr. Kitchlew was one of the active members of the Defence Committee of the I.N.A. He pleaded the case with the same intelligence and ability which he had displayed during the 'Meerut Conspiracy Case.'

The Court Martial, not unexpectedly, convicted all the three accused but Kitchlew and Nehru exerted their pressure outside the Court by making a spate of public speeches and statements. The Government knew that the people of India had the greatest sympathy with the I.N.A. prisoners; and their leaders like Kitchlew, Nehru and Gandhi could start another wave of civil disobedience against the government. Hence the sentences were ultimately suspended to calm down the Leaders and general masses.

Another issue which inflamed the Indian public in the same period was the naval mutiny at Bombay. The mutiny in the Royal Indian Navy brought huge crowds into the streets and sparked off serious riots in several of the big cities. On February 21st, 1946, the British military opened fire on the naval demonstrators in Bombay and feelings ran high. The situation grew more explosive when over a thousand men in the Royal Indian Air Force camps in Bombay came out on a sympathetic strike. By February 22nd the mutineers were in control of nearly twenty naval vessels in Bombay harbour, including the flagship of the British Vice-Admiral, and trained the ships' guns on the city. Sardar Patel and Dr. Kitchlew appealed for a peaceful settlement and advised the workers in the factories as well as students, not to strike. "Such a thing," Kitchlew remarked, "is not likely to help the unfortunate naval ratings in their efforts to get redress of their legitimate grievances." Privately Kitchlew advised the demonstrators to play it cool and promised that the Congress would do its best to prevent unduly severe punishment or victimisation. Jinnah also offered his services to the navy men to see that justice was done. Meanwhile, the constitutional situation was developing rapidly. The Labour Government led by Major - C.R. Attlee saw that it would be futile and unrewarding to hold an awakened militant India under British tutelage. Speaking before the House of Commons on 15th March 1946, the British Premier declared, "India herself must choose what will be her future constitution. I hope that the Indian people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. If she does so elect it must be her own free will. If, on the other hand she elects for Independence, in our view she has a right to do so." As for the Muslim League's goal of Pakistan, he said, "We are very mindful of the rights of minorities, and

minorities shall be able to live free from fear. On the other hand we cannot allow a minority to place a veto on the advance of the majority."

On February 19th, 1946, Lord Pethick Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, announced in the House of Lords that the Government had decided to send a Cabinet Mission to assist the Viceroy in these deliberations. The Cabinet Mission was to consist of Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, and Mr. A.V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Cabinet Mission, soon after its arrival in New Delhi on 24th March, 1946, plunged itself into a series of discussions with the representatives of the Congress, the Muslim League, the Sikhs and the Hindu Mahasabha, Liberal leaders like Sir Tej Bhadur Sapru and Mr. M.R. Jaykar were also interviewed while the Cabinet Mission was holding these discussions, both the Congress and the League were busy digging their trenches in order to drive as hard a bargain as possible.

The Congress made it clear that it would never agree to the partition of India. The Muslim League, through a convention held from 7-9th April 1946, of over 400 Muslims who had been elected on the Muslim League ticket to the various Assemblies, declared that the Muslim nation will never submit to any constitution for a united India and will never participate in any single constitution making machinery set up for the purpose. It demanded that the zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the North East and the Punjab, the North West Frontier province, Sind and Baluchistan in the North West of India should be constituted into the sovereign state of Pakistan.

It was obvious that the two parties approached the Constitutional problem from opposite points of view. Jinnah's solution was to dismantle the existing central structure of the Government of India and reconstruct it on the basis of Pakistan. After the establishment of Pakistan he was prepared to arrive at an amicable arrangement with the rest of India on a treaty basis. Once Pakistan was conceded, he was not averse to the idea of Super Centre on an agency basis entrusted by both states to look after certain common subjects. The Congress position was diametrically opposite. They would start with the existing centre and were willing to subtract from the central list certain subjects in which the Provinces wanted to be autonomous. The Cabinet Mission pointed out to Jinnah that he could not have the six provinces in their

entirety, claiming full sovereignty for the proposed state of Pakistan. There were a number of districts in the area that he claimed which had non-Muslim majorities. If he wanted full sovereignty, he should be satisfied with a smaller Pakistan. If he wanted the whole area, then he should be willing to relinquish some part of the sovereignty to union centre. In other words in the latter case, there would be a sort of three-tier Federation with provinces at the lowest level, followed by Federations or groups, which in their turn would be linked for certain common subjects to union centre. Jinnah was not agreeable to the three-tier union scheme, but it was obvious that he was bargaining for the best deal. He suggested that if the Congress viewed his demand of six provinces in their entirety as excessive, they should tell him what he ought to have. The Cabinet Misssion found that they were getting nowhere, either with the Muslim League or with the Congress. Jinnah was demanding more or less his full sovereign Pakistan. The Congress on the other hand was even opposed to the creation of an All India Union on a three-tier basis. The Mission thought that perhaps the best way to resolve this tangle was to proceed on a new line of approach. Their scheme was that a new Interim Government should be formed which would be entrusted with the task of setting up an All India Commission from the elected members of the Provincial and Central Assemblies. This Commission would be called upon to determine principally whether there should be one or two sovereign States in British India. If the Commission failed to arrive at an agreement on this matter within thirty days, the question would be decided by taking votes. If the dissenting minority amounted to more than a certain prescribed percentage, the question whether they should be allowed to form a separate State would be decided as follows: The Muslim representatives in each of the legislative Assemblies of Sind, The N.W.F.P., the Punjab and Bengal (with the addition of the district of Sylhet from Assam) would meet separately to decide whether they would like to separate from the rest of India. Baluchistan would also be separate if the contiguous provinces voted for separation. Similarly, if the Muslim representatives of the North West Frontier Province voted against separation the province would still have to be separated if the surrounding provinces voted for it. It would be possible for the non-Muslim representatives of districts in which they were in majority, and which were contiguous to the main part of India, to vote whether these districts should be separated from the parent provinces and attached to the

territory of India. If 75 per cent of the Muslim representatives voted for separation they would have a constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for their own area. Even this ingenious scheme was turned down by the Congress and the Muslim League.

The Cabinet Mission once again turned towards the three-tier scheme as a possible way out. It may be recalled that the Congress had already expressed their opposition to the latter scheme, but probably Maulana Azad, who wanted to avoid partition at any cost, persuaded the Congress to agree to accord maximum autonomy to provinces as a better alternative than the partition of the Country. He issued a lengthy statement on April 15th 1946, in which he tried to show that Pakistan would be detrimental to the interests of Muslims themselves. He pointed out that all the Muslims fear of Hindu domination at the centre would cease to exist if the Congress were to agree to grant full autonomy to the provincial units. He suggested that there could be two lists of central subjects, one compulsory and the other optional. The provincial units could administer all the optional subjects except a minimum of compulsory subjects delegated to the centre.

The Cabinet Mission felt encouraged by the reaction. When Jinnah was informed of this development, he was not enthusiastic about the scheme, but was willing to discuss the proposal with the Congress after seeking the approval of his working Committee. The concrete proposal that the Mission put forward in writing to the Congress and the League was that the three-tier Federation would be constructed as follows:

1. The All India Union Government and Legislature would deal with Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, Fundamental Rights and would have the necessary powers of taxation to raise the finances required for these subjects.
2. In the Government and the Legislature of the union equal representation would be given to the Muslim majority provinces or their group and to the Hindu majority provinces or their group. In addition to these there would be representatives from the states.
3. The residuary powers would vest in the Provinces. Provinces could form groups and such groups would determine what Provincial Subjects they should deal with in common.
4. There would be a provision both in the constitutions of the Unions and the groups whereby any Province, if a majority in its Legislative Assembly so desired, could call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial

period of ten years, and ten-yearly intervals thereafter.

The Cabinet Mission also put forward its proposals as regards the composition of the Constituent Assembly. The most important of these dealt with meetings of three sections of Provinces - one section each for Hindu and Muslim majority provinces and the third for the states. It was laid down that after the preliminary meeting of the constituent Assembly at which the general order of business would be settled, the Assembly would divide itself into three sections of Provinces. The two sections representing Hindu and Muslim majority provinces would meet separately to decide the provincial constitutions for their group and, if they so desired, a group constitution. This was a major concession to the Muslim League in the sense that the Muslim Provinces would be allowed to meet in their sections and decide their respective constitutions as well as their group constitutions. But once these were settled, any province which did not wish to remain in the original group to which it was assigned could opt out of that group, join another, or remain outside all groups. This was presumably a concession to the Congress for a Province like Assam which had a Hindu majority but which was likely to be placed in a Muslim group. Finally the three sections were to meet as the Constituent to settle the Constitution for the union, on the lines suggested by the Cabinet Mission in the previous paragraph. Another major concession to the Muslim League was that the Constituent Assembly could not by a simple majority write into the Union Constituion any provision which involved a communal issue. Such provisions could only be considered to have been passed by the Assembly if a majority of both the two major communities voted in its favour. Discussions dragged on and despite a special conference that took place between the 5th and 12th May, the gulf between the two parties had still to be bridged. This was well reflected in the proposals that the two parties had put forward to the Cabinet Mission. Some of the salient points in the demands put forward by the Muslim League were significant for the first time. Jinnah was submitting something in writing which compromised his demand for Pakistan. The six Muslim Provinces known as the 'Pakistan Group' would have a separate constitution-making body which would frame constitutions for the group and the Provinces in the groups. This constitution-making body would determine the list of subjects that would be vested in the constituent provinces and the list of subjects that the Pakistan Federation would be entrusted with. The two Federations, the Pakistan

Group and that formed by the Hindu Provinces, would come together under a union which would deal with subjects like Foreign Affairs, defence and communications necessary for defence. It was also stipulated in the League memorandum that there should be party of representation between the two Federations in the Union Executive and the legislature, if they were formed. The proposals submitted by the Congress differed fundamentally from those of the League. The Congress suggested that the first step should be for the Constituent Assembly for the whole of India to meet and later on it could be decided if the provinces desired to form groups. It was made clear that it was up to the provinces to function as a group and let the group frame the Constitutions. It was pointed out that Assam could not belong to the Muslim group. Nor was the N.W.F.P. in favour of joining the Muslim group, as the elections had indicated. The Congress was similarly opposed to the principle of parity of representation between groups of provinces, either in the union Executive or in the Legislature. They were of the opinion that the provision that on no major communal issue could a decision be taken by the Constituent Assembly unless a majority of the members of the community concerned were in its favour, was an adequate safeguard for all minorites.

CHAPTER 12

A BLOODY PARTITION

The Cabinet Mission announced their plan on 16th May 1946. They had to put forward their own proposals because they said that even though the Congress and the League had made considerable concessions, there still remained a gap to be filled between the positions of the two parties. They turned down the demand for a sovereign State of Pakistan as impracticable and unworkable. First of all the six provinces claimed by the League would have a non-Muslim minority of 37.93 per cent in the north eastern area. In this respect, they were not being quite fair to the League because the Muslim League did agree, as the statement itself admitted to consider adjustment of boundaries. Another argument against Pakistan in the view of the Mission was that even if it were established, twenty million Muslims would still remain as minorities dispersed in the remainder of British India. The Cabinet Mission pointed out that they had also considered a smaller sovereign Pakistan, confined to the Muslim majority areas alone. They were not prepared to recommend this either, because it would involve a radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal contrary to the wishes and interests of a considerable proportion of inhabitants of these provinces. They also referred to administrative, economic and military disadvantages of dividing the country.

The Cabinet Mission also turned down the Congress scheme by which those Provinces who desired could cede to the centre certain optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones like Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. Presumably the Congress was hoping that some Hindu majority Provinces might make such concessions to the centre in order to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale. The Cabinet Mission pointed out that this would involve a cumbrous and confusing arrangement in which some Ministers in charge of compulsory subjects would be responsible to the whole of India, whereas some who dealt with optional subjects would be responsible only to those provinces who had ceded control over these subjects to the centre. As regards the princely states it was hoped that they would offer their co-operation to an Independent India because "the relationship which has hitherto existed between the Rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be

retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new Government."

Some of the salient recommendations made by the Mission were as follows:

1. A union of India comprising both British India and the States with its domain over Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, and with powers necessary to raise the finances required for the subjects.
2. Union Executives and Legislature to be constituted from the British India and States representatives. The provision regarding parity of representation in the Union Legislature and Executive between Hindu and Muslim majority provinces or groups was deleted. The Muslim fear of a Hindu majority was met by the Provision that on a major communal issue a decision by the legislature would require a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all members present and voting.
3. All the residuary subjects would vest in the Provinces.
4. Provinces would have a right to join groups and each group would be allowed to determine the Provincial subjects to be administered in common.
5. In the Cabinet Mission plan itself three sections were provided, each having its own Provinces. Section A had Madras, Bombay and the U.P., Bihar and the Orrisa and C.P. Out of 187 representatives in section A, 167 were general or non-Muslim and 20 Muslims. Section B had the Punjab, the N.W.F.P. and Sind in which out of 35 representatives, Muslims had 22, Sikhs 4 and general 9. Section C had Bengal and Assam in which out of 70 representatives Muslims had 36, and general 34. Thus the total number of representatives for British India was 292 on the basis of one representative for every million of the adult population. The maximum for Indian States, provided on the same basis, was 93.
6. The representatives chosen above would meet to draft the new constitution. After the preliminary business like the election of the Chairman, other Officers and an advisory committee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas, the provincial representatives would divide up into three sections as indicated above - A, B and C.

The council of the All India Muslim League through their resolution of 6th June 1946 accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan.

The All India Congress Committee meeting in early July 1946 in Bombay, ratified the resolution of the Working

Committee which had accepted the long term proposals of the Cabinet Mission, particularly with regard to the compulsory grouping of Provinces, with its own interpretations, and rejected the proposals for the formation of an interim Government. Soon after the meeting of the All India Congress Committee, Jawahar Lal Nehru, who had then become the President of the Congress, had a Press Conference in which he was blunt in his opposition to the group Scheme put forward in the Cabinet Mission plan. Nehru further asserted that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly completely unfettered by agreement and free to meet all situations as they arose. Maulana Azad commented that Nehru's statement was most unfortunate. He said, "I must place on record that Jawahar Lal's statement was wrong. It was not correct to say that Congress was free to modify the plan as it pleased. We had further agreed that there would be the three sections viz, A,B and C in which the Provinces would be grouped. These matters could not be changed unilaterally by Congress without the consent of other parties to the agreement."

In a letter to Lord Wavell dated 25th June, Azad wrote, "While adhering to our views we accept your proposals and are prepared to work them with a view to achieve our objective." This evasiveness aroused Muslim League suspicions. The League feared that the Congress was planning to change the Cabinet Mission plan to suit their interests in the Constituent Assembly where they had a great majority.

The Muslim League Council in a resolution passed on July 29th 1946 declared that 'now the time has come for the Muslim nation to resort to Direct Action' to achieve Pakistan to assert their just rights, to vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present British slavery and the contemplated future Caste Hindu domination.

Jinnah, in his statement issued two days before the Direct Action day, made it clear: "But the 16th August is not for the purpose of resorting to 'Direct Action' in any form or shape; therefore, I enjoin upon the Muslims to carry out the instructions and abide by them strictly and conduct themselves peacefully and in a disciplined manner, and not to play into the hands of the enemies."

The war of India's Independence was now all but over. What remained was a final battle for the spoils; the apportionment of interests, authority, influence and prospects between the three major parties, the British, the Indians and the Pakistanis. The biggest sufferers in the last act were the millions of Punjabis and Bengalis whose homelands were

partitioned. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, long before the partition of India, had warned the people of Punjab about the horrors of the division of India. His forecast about the serious communal trouble and massacre of innocent people seemed to be absolutely correct.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew had been a consistent champion of complete Independence as well as the national unity. He had refused to compromise his principles for the sake of popularity.

The nationalist forces in Punjab gave him all respect for his solid constructive work and for his high ideals. There was also much appreciation for what he had done for the I.N.A. heroes and also for philanthropic causes in his own home town and province.

Saifuddin Kitchlew was elected President of the Punjab Provincial Congress near the time of the partition of India. He remained in office for some time. Earlier he had held various offices in the organization ranging from General Secretary in 1924 to President in 1932.

In 1946, my father Mohammad Zakaria Kitchlew, contested a local body election in Amritsar as an independent candidate from a Muslim constituency. His opponent was a Muslim League candidate Malik Ghulam Nabi. Saifuddin - Kitchlew gave a brief speech at the polling station. The result was amazing. My father was elected with an overwhelming majority. It was all due to Kitchlew's magnetic charm and popularity that my father was elected by nearly 4,000 votes majority.

In the month of December 1946, the Amritsar Municipality decided to name the Lohari Gate of Amritsar as Kitchlew Gate in recognition of the selfless service which he rendered to the people of Amritsar, including considerable amounts donated to the local orphanages. It must also be remembered that Kitchlew's ancestral house was situated in the Lohari Gate area (Katra Sufaid).

During the disobedience movements, Kitchlew's house had been the rendezvous of Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Moulana Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, Asaf Ali, Tassaduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani, Subhash Bose and other leading political figures. Also Kitchlew had addressed numberless public meetings in the Bagh near the Lohari Gate. All the prominent Leaders of the Congress had passed through in processions under this gate. Kitchlew sold this historical house and donated a considerable amount to the Congress. Meanwhile, national politics was

picking up a fratricidal momentum, as we shall see now.

Nehru approached Jinnah in an effort to cut the Gordian knot of suspicion. The two Leaders met at Jinnah's house in Bombay on 15th August, but their views could not be reconciled. Serious riots in East Bengal and Bihar broke out between Hindus and Muslims. On September 2nd 1946 the Viceroy inducted into office an Interim Government led by Nehru. The Muslim League boycotted the Interim Government. At the beginning of October, the Viceroy entered into further negotiations with Jinnah who presented nine demands as a basis for League entry into Government. Nehru agreed to minor concessions and the Interim Government was reconstituted on October 15th with the inclusion of 5 Muslim League nominees, among them Jogendra Nath Mandal, member of the scheduled caste community.

Meanwhile, Kitchlew's heart was wrenched by mass killings of Muslims in Bengal. He appealed to the people for peace and amity. Kitchlew's reaction to the riots was typical of the man, deep sympathy for the victims of both communities, stern rebukes to the perpetrators of the ghastly crimes regardless of their affiliations, and courageous tours of the worst affected areas disregarding personal safety.

In a press statement, Kitchlew appealed to both the communities to remain calm and stop killing each other. He promoted the formation of a local peace committee consisting of members of all religions.

Kitchlew took the initiative in calling his friend Hussain Shahid Suhrawardhy (later to be Prime Minister of Pakistan) to lead the peace committee. The result was amazing. Suhrawardhy was successful in stopping the riots with Mahatma Gandhi.

In New Delhi, the game of politics continued very much as before. On December 9th 1946 the Constituent Assembly was formally convened but the League was absent. Nehru made an historic speech in the Assembly and paid tribute to the Congress Leaders. The Congress demanded the resignation of the League representatives from the Interim Government on the grounds that the League had rejected the Cabinet Mission Scheme, absented itself from the Constituent Assembly and was also committed to a programme of 'Direct Action'. Liaquat Ali Khan retaliated that it was presumptuous on the part of the Congress and minority members of the Executive Council to demand the resignation of their Muslim League Colleagues when the Congress had not accepted the Cabinet Mission plan. This was followed by the threat of Patel that the

Congress would withdraw from the Interim Government if the Muslim League were allowed to remain in it. The Viceroy was in sympathy with the Muslim League contention and was himself of the view that the Congress had not in fact accepted the Cabinet Mission plan. However, events had reached such a crucial stage that the British Government had to make up their mind as to whether they should ask for the resignation of the League or let the Congress withdraw from the Interim Government. It was obvious that either course was fraught with dangerous consequences. Attlee felt that in such circumstances a bold policy as well as a new Viceroy were needed to save the situation. On February 20th 1947, he announced the appointment of Admiral Mountbatten. He also declared that in the absence of an agreement between the Hindus and Muslims, power would be transferred to existing provinces and it would be for them to group together as they liked.

Gandhi cautioned Nehru that Attlee's statement paved the way for partition. Saifuddin Kitchlew addressed a number of meetings in Amritsar against the British Government's divide-and-rule policy. During this period Kitchlew moved to Delhi from Amritsar because of certain events in his native Punjab.

The kingpin of the Pakistan demand was the Punjab, the largest, most populous and wealthiest province in Northern India. On communal grounds the claim was valid, for the Muslims comprised about 56 per cent of the total population of 29 million. The League had swept the polls in the 1946 elections, winning 79 of the 86 seats reserved for Muslims and emerging as the largest party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. But it lacked a clear majority. Khizar Hayat - Khan Tiwana, the Unionist Party Leader, succeeded in forming a government in coalition with the Congress and the Sikhs.

The Muslim League bitterly resented its exclusion from office. Throughout 1946, tension mounted in the Punjab even though it remained comparatively free from the communal disturbances then raging in Bengal and Bihar.

The most disturbing feature of Punjab politics was the formation of private armies by the three communities. The Governor, Sir Evan Jenkins, strongly urged Khizar Hayat - Tiwana to declare them unlawful but Tiwana procrastinated until it was too late.

Saifuddin Kitchlew who had been elected President of the Punjab Congress, was staying with one of his friends in Multan (a leading Industrialist named Rai Bhadur Kalyan Das)

when in the early hours of the morning, a hostile mob attacked the house of Mr. Das and stabbed him to death. The mob also manhandled Kitchlew badly when he tried to rescue his host. Luckily, one of Kitchlew's relations, an army official, came to know about this incident; he rushed towards Kalyan - Das's house and saved Kitchlew's life. The news was relayed immediately on the All India Radio. Nehru and Gandhi were greatly disturbed over this incident.

The Chief Minister Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana dramatically submitted his resignation on the 2nd March, on the eve of the Punjab Assembly's budget session. The following day Sir Evan Jenkins called on the Khan of Mamdot, the Muslim League Leader, to form a Ministry. The Sikhs responded in the same evening with a mass rally at which their fiery Leader Master Tara Singh added fuel to the flames. He brandished his Kirpan on the steps of the Assembly buildings and said, "If we can snatch power from the British, no one can stop us from snatching the government from Muslims. We shall not allow the League to exist. We shall rule over them and will seize the government. I have sounded the bugle. Finish the Muslims and the Muslim League." It was this challenge which Muslims took up courageously.

The next day, 4th March, the struggle for power in the Punjab shifted to the streets. Serious rioting broke out in Amritsar, Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Sialkot and Jullunder, and for the first time in the Punjab's history in rural areas as well. It was a horrible exhibition of insanity. All three communities were to pay a fantastic price in killed, wounded, missing and prisoners. Kitchlew became very sad about the whole situation. He toured the affected areas and remarked "I have seen ghastly sights and I have heard of behaviour of human-beings which would disgrace brutes."

Kitchlew visited Amritsar Jubilee Hospital and saw the wounded and talked to them. He also visited the families of the dead and sympathised with them. Kitchlew also visited Lahore Mayo Hospital where he encouraged the wounded and condoled with the families of the dead. He also conducted the cases as a Barrister on behalf of the victims of the riots at the Amritsar Sessions Court, for which he did not take any fee.

Lord Mountbatten on his arrival in India in March 1947 plunged into a round of intensive interviews with the leading political figures of the country.

Gandhi made the sensational proposal that the Interim Government be handed over to the Muslim League to avoid the partition of India. No one took him seriously and he washed his

hands of all responsibility for the negotiations. It soon became obvious that a United India could not be imposed at the cost of a major civil war.

Mountbatten sent his plan of partition to London with Ismay and his secretary George Abell urging the Government to let him have their approval by 10th May. He was thinking of presenting the approved plan before a meeting of party Leaders on 17th May. Mountbatten's plan came back from London with several important amendments which he felt had dimmed the prospects of the plan being accepted by Indian Leaders. By that time he had become very friendly with Nehru who was staying at Simla as his guest. He showed the amended version of the plan to Nehru who turned it down, saying that the Congress would categorically reject it. His basic opposition was that the draft plan did not recognize the fact that the Indian Union was the successor authority to the British Government in India, from which certain states wanted to secede. The draft plan proposed the transfer of power to a large number of successor states who could unite, if they desired, into two or more states. Similarly the idea that each of these successor states could conclude separate treaties with the British Government would bring about the Balkanization of India. Particularly some of the major princely states would try to emerge as independent Kingdoms. When Mountbatten found that Nehru was bitterly opposed to the draft that he had received from London he decided that another approach should be made to resolve the deadlock. He turned to the plan of V.P. Menon who had drafted a scheme according to which transfer of power would take place on the basis of Dominion Status to India and such other areas as wanted to separate from India and form another state. He had already obtained Patel's approval of this scheme. Mountbatten suggested that Nehru should examine it. Nehru was not averse to the plan according to which power would be tranferred to two central governments on the basis of Dominion Status. Menon also kept Patel, who was delighted by the turn of events, fully informed. It was significant that while these crucial discussions were taking place Jinnah and the League were in the dark as to how the final plan was being evolved. What emerged from the evidence made available was that Jinnah and the League were not close friends of Mountbatten. Unlike Nehru, they did not seem to enjoy the confidence of Mountbatten.

V.P. Menon was justified in thinking that he was the first to obtain Patel's approval to the idea of partition and transfer of power on the basis of Dominion Status. But so far

as Dominion Status was concerned there was another claimant. Krishna Menon takes credit as the first to have suggested an early transfer of Power to India on the basis of Dominion Status. (Alan Campbell). Even V.P. Menon's claim that he was the original author of the partition plan, as finally announced and accepted in the form of the 3rd June 1947 plan of transfer of Power could be admitted only with certain qualifications. First of all, the idea of Pakistan without the Hindu majority districts of Bengal and the Punjab, and without the Hindu areas of Assam, had been put forward as early as September 1944, by C. Rajagopal Achari during the course of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks. Similarly the detailed mechanics of ascertaining the wishes of the Muslim areas of the Punjab, Bengal and Provinces like Sind, the N.W.F.P., Baluchistan and a district like Sylhet, had been spelled out by the Cabinet Mission in April 1946, before they put forward their final plan of 16th May. The idea of partitioning the Punjab and Bengal, the holding of fresh elections in the N.W.F.P., and the inclusion of Sylhet in Muslim Bengal were there in the plan that Mountbatten sent with Ismay and George Abell to London on May 2nd 1947. Thus it could be said that V.P. Menon's main contribution was in incorporating all these ideas into a new plan which might be acceptable to both parties. V.P. Menon played an important role in the sense that he was an excellent draftsman who incorporated a number of ideas into his scheme and thus increased the chances of it being accepted by the party Leaders. His draft of 'Heads of Agreement' of 16th May 1947, was an outstanding example.

The 'Heads of Agreement' were eight in all and suggested that in the event of a decision that there should be two Sovereign States in India, the Central Government of each State would assume power and be responsible to its respective Constituent Assembly on a Dominion Status basis. The Government of India Act, 1935, would be modified to conform to Dominion Status position and would form the constitution of each Dominion in the initial stages. The present Governor-General would be reappointed as a common Governor-General for both Dominions. A commission would be appointed for the demarcation of boundaries. There would also be a division of the armed forces. It was stipulated that the units recruited from the territory of the Dominion concerned would be allocated to that Dominion. But in the case of mixed units the separation and redistribution was to be entrusted to a committee chaired by Field-Marshal Claude Auchinleck and the Chiefs of the General Staff of the two Dominions. The

Committee was to function under the supervision of a council constituted by the Governor-General and the two Defence Ministers.

The Congress agreement to these 'Heads of Agreement' was obtained in writing, but Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan were not willing to commit themselves beyond accepting the general principles.

Mountbatten tried to pressure Jinnah by suggesting that if his complete agreement was not forthcoming he might have to resort to the alternative of demitting power to the Interim Government on a Dominion Status basis. But the Viceroy found that Jinnah had a very steady nerve. Jinnah probably knew that these were bluff and threat tactics. The Viceroy left for London on 18th May and the British Government after a full appraisal of the situation from the Viceroy, issued the statement regarding the method of transfer of power, 3rd June, 1947.

Some of the noteworthy proposals in the statement were with regard to the partitioning of the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal, the setting up of a commission to demarcate the boundaries, and the hint that the British Government were willing to transfer power before June 1948. It was clear that power was to be transferred to two Central authorities responsible to their respective Constituent Assemblies. The work of the existing Constituent Assembly was not to be interrupted. A new Constituent Assembly consisting of the N.W.F.P., Sind, British Baluchistan, West Punjab and such other Muslim districts, East Bengal and the districts of Sylhet, could be established if a decision in favour of partition and the creation of such a Constituent Assembly were obtained in the manner prescribed in the statement of 3rd June 1947.

The Provincial legislative Assemblies of the Punjab and Bengal were to meet in two parts, one, consisting of the representatives of the Muslim majority districts and the other representing the rest of the Province, to decide by a simple majority whether the Province concerned should be partitioned. If either part decided in favour of Partition, the Province would be partitioned. A Commission for each of the two provinces was to be set up by the Governor-General to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab and Bengal after ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. The Commission was also to be instructed to take into account other factors. A referendum was to be held in the N.W.F.P. in the event of the whole or any

part of the Punjab deciding not to join the existing constituent Assembly and to ascertain the wishes of the people of the province regarding the Constituent Assembly they would like to join. British Baluchistan was also to be given an opportunity to decide whether it would like to join the existing Constituent Assembly or new Constituent Assembly consisting of Muslim majority areas. A referendum was also to be held in the district of Sylhet to determine whether in the event of the partition of Bengal, the people of Sylhet would like to be amalgamated with the Muslim part of Bengal.

Both the Muslim League and the Congress had carried on bitter and lengthy negotiations and if some decision were not taken at this stage, they knew that the alternative would be chaos. The League was not altogether jubilant about obtaining a Pakistan stripped of East Punjab and West Bengal. The Muslim League Council, which met in New Delhi on June 10th passed a resolution saying that though it could not agree to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab, it had to consider the plan of 3rd June for the transfer of power as a whole. The resolution authorized Jinnah to accept the partition scheme as laid down in the 3rd June statement 'as a compromise'. Jinnah was also armed with the powers necessary to take all steps and decisions with regard to the implementation of the partition plan. The All India Congress Committee meeting on 14th June 1947 was more dramatic. As Azad noted later, there was a touch of irony in the situation, for arrayed against the resolution accepting the plan of 3rd June were both nationalist Muslims and those 'men who have posed as Nationalists but who are in fact utterly communal in outlook.' (Maulana Azad P.197) Azad was referring perhaps to men like Purshotam Das Tandon, who in an impassioned speech said that acceptance of the resolution would mean surrender to the British and to the Muslim League. 'The Working Committee has failed India, but India with the strength of millions behind her must reject this resolution.' It looked as if neither Pandit Pant's (who moved the resolution) persuasiveness nor Patel's unemotional clarity could overcome the feeling of bitterness that pervaded the Committee. Gandhi had to intervene, posing before the Committee the unpleasant consequences of rejecting the plan. The consequences of such a rejection would be the finding of a new set of Leaders who could constitute not only the Congress Working Committee but also take charge of the Government. The Committee endorsed the official resolution by 157 votes to 29 in a House of 218. The resolution pointed out: 'The

A.I.C.C. earnestly trusts that when present passions have subsided India's problems will be viewed in the proper perspective and the false doctrines of two nations will be discredited and discarded by all. Thus, partition had arrived not with a bang but with a whimper.

Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh, announced their agreement to the Indian people in successive broadcasts over All India Radio.

"It is with no joy in my heart," Nehru said, "that I commend these proposals, though I have no doubt in my mind that this is the right course."

Jinnah supported the compromise. He called for an end to the Muslim League agitation.

Baldev Singh speaking for the Sikhs, for whom partition meant disaster, succeeded in concealing the bitterness of his co-religionists.

The constitutional formalities were completed in London. In a fortnight it secured the approval of both the Houses of Parliament. It named August 15th 1947 as the date on which "two independent Dominions shall be set up in India, to be known respectively as India and Pakistan."

At last the appointed day arrived, the day of triumph and dedication. On the evening of 14th August, huge cheering crowds lined the main streets of New Delhi as Nehru, Patel, Prasad and others made their way to Parliament for the solemn ceremony of dedication to free India. But it was not a day of joy for Saifuddin Kitchlew who was deeply moved and touched by the horrors of killings, arson and loot due to the communal riots throughout the country.

Kitchlew himself visited the wounded and the families of the dead. He saw and talked to the girls who were raped and he conducted legal cases as a Barrister without taking any fee.

Two danger spots stood out, the partitioned provinces of Bengal and the Punjab. Largely due to Gandhi's presence and his remarkable healing powers, communal passions in Bengal were kept within manageable bounds. In the Punjab, however, the accumulated tension unleashed a full scale civil war.

I had joined the M.A.O. College in Amritsar in 1945, an institution where my father, grandfather and uncles had studied.

I well remember that Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in those days still seemed to be friendly to each other. But suddenly in 1946 and 1947 when the British showed their inclination for leaving India and transferring power to the Indians, a sudden

volcano of communal trouble erupted. Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims who had lived together for centuries became enemies overnight. It was a horrible experience for me and my brothers and sisters to see how the peaceful atmosphere was turned into a blood bath.

August 15th 1947, date of the partition of India, was also my 16th birthday. My father, who had become the Government Advocate, moved to Lahore along with all the family. Almost the day we left Amritsar, our four storeyed house there, situated in the heart of the city, was burnt down by the rioters and the Kitchlew Hosiery Factory which was being run by my elder brother was also burnt down. The family suffered heavy loss.

While the rest of the Sub-Continent celebrated the attainment of freedom, the Punjab entered a period of unmitigated horror. In the villages and in the principal cities like Lahore, Amritsar, Kasur, Jullunder and Gujranwala people were mercilessly killed for no other reason than the accident of birth. Each atrocity bred an equivalent response and within days 'the land of five rivers' was aflame with bestiality. The women, children, old and young were mercilessly murdered on a large scale.

CHAPTER 13

ON THE WORLD STAGE

Saifuddin Kitchlew was a selfless Leader. He was a clean minded Indian and a true servant of the people.

After the partition of India Dr. Kitchlew was approached by Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Pakistan's High Commissioner in India, and had a two hour meeting with him. During this meeting Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan requested Kitchlew to join the Muslim League and move to Pakistan. But Kitchlew's reply to Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan was in the following words, "If all the Muslim Leaders move to Pakistan then who is going to look after the millions of Muslims left in India as minorities?" This was disclosed by Nawabzada - Liaquat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, to the author in an interview in Lahore on the 29th October, 1950.

Saifuddin Kitchlew was also tipped as Indian Ambassador to Turkey but declined to accept the assignment. This news was published in the "Statesman" and "Imroz" of Lahore.

Despite the repeated offers, it appeared that Kitchlew was horrified at the wholesale slaughter of the innocent people of India and Pakistan and that was the reason that he did not accept any assignment.

In 1951, Nehru resigned from the Congress Working Committee due to the differences between him and the reactionary Purshotam Das Tandon, who had become President. In the Punjab dissensions in the Provincial Congress and the Congress Legislative Party took the most unpredictable turn. The groups led by Saifuddin Kitchlew and Bhim - Sen Sachar charged the Government with maladministration, condemned the evil of bribery and corruption in the State and alleged that 90 per cent of the officials were corrupt. Normal constitutional Government was suspended and President's rule was introduced in Punjab in 1951. In any case, Kitchlew had already become aloof from active politics. The massacre of human lives on both sides had affected him tremendously and he started working for Peace, not only in the Indian Sub-Continent but also in the entire world.

The World Peace Council which had been created in Warsaw, held its first meeting in Berlin from February 21st to 26th, 1951 and called for a Peace Pact between the five great powers.

On March 3rd and 4th 1951, the preparatory Committee

for the first All India meeting in Delhi was confronted with a problem concerning the venue of the proposed Congress, for C. Rajagopalachari, then Home Minister of India, declared that it could not be held in Delhi.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew headed a delegation which tried to persuade the Minister to lift the ban but C. Rajagopalachari was adamant. Unable to secure permission to hold their Congress in Delhi, the preparatory Committee selected Bombay as the venue. The All India Peace Convention met there (May 11-13) and was attended by 288 delegates coming from all parts of India. The Preparatory Committee was dissolved and a full fledged All India Peace Council of 150 members with unlimited powers of co-operation was created.

Dr. Kitchlew was elected President. The convention recommended that Dr. Kitchlew and Prithvi Raj Kapoor, the eminent actor and film producer, be accepted on the World Peace Council.

Responding to the call of the Berlin meeting of the World Peace Council, the Bombay Convention endorsed the appeal for a five power peace pact and set a target for more than eleven million signatures to be collected in India in support of the move.

The Asian and Pacific Peace Conference met in Peking (October 2 - 12, 1952) with 367 delegates from 37 Countries participating in the deliberations. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was elected to the Presidium. The Conference approved a series of documents condemning the United States of America for aggression in Korea and for the use of bacteriological warfare. At the conclusion of the Conference a Peace Liaison Committee of the Asian and Pacific regions was set up. Saifuddin Kitchlew was elected its Vice-Chairman.

KITCHLEW RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL PEACE PRIZE

In 1952, Dr. Kitchlew toured Soviet Russia, China, Sweden and Finland at the invitation of the governments to attend the International Peace Conferences. The same year Kitchlew was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize worth £25,000 in sterling. He was the first Indian to receive the honour. Saifuddin Kitchlew donated the entire amount of £25,000 to the Peace Movement. His action of donating the huge sum was another example of selflessness and devotion to humanity. The World Press acclaimed his generosity and sincerity.

Kitchlew visited Peking at the invitation of Chairman - Mao Tse Tung and attended the International Peace

Conference there. It would be interesting to note that the Kashmir Problem was also discussed at the Conference. Dr. Kitchlew was the Leader of the Indian Peace Mission and Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif was representing Pakistan. Both Leaders embraced each other to the applause of 400 world delegates. Later the two Leaders issued a joint statement in which they condemned the United Nations for its failure to solve the Kashmir problem and expressed hope for an amicable solution. After the conference Dr. Kitchlew had a two hour meeting with Chairman Mao, Chou-En-Lai and Kuo Mo Jo.

KITCHLEW MEETS STALIN

In 1953, Kitchlew visited Moscow at the invitation of the World Peace Council and became the Vice-President of the Council. During this tour Kitchlew had the honour of being invited by the Russian Leader Marshal Stalin. Kitchlew saw him on February 17th and reported that Stalin was in excellent health and good spirits. The conversation had serious political implications. Stalin spoke favourably of General Eisenhower, who had just become President of the United States, and expressed approval of the American Policy of non-involvement in the affairs of the other nations. Eisenhower was better than Truman who was 'under the thumb of Churchill'. Unfortunately Eisenhower was surrounded by Capitalists and American foreign policy was fairly consistent; it was a capitalist policy. All the Americans were interested in was making profits.

During the conversation, Stalin reserved his greatest scorn for the British, saying that their attitude toward the Russians remained incomprehensible. What chiefly astonished him was their ingratitude, for had not Russia 'saved their hides during the war?' It was an odd remark, for the British had fought on alone when Stalin and Hitler were Allies, and they had saved the world from becoming a Nazi Empire. Warming to the subject, Stalin described to Saifuddin Kitchlew the fate of Great Britain if war broke out between America and Russia. Both America and Russia would suffer grievous wounds, but Great Britain would be annihilated. Meanwhile the Britains were in no position to support America in a war, and he went on to suggest that if they had any sense, they would join the Russian camp. "France and England are going to break - it is bound to happen," he said.

On the subject of India, Stalin was less pontifical. He thought India had more to learn from China than from Russia and he did not think America could 'buy' India. There was also

some talk between Stalin and Kitchlew about a future meeting between Nehru and Stalin and about a diplomatic offensive to end the Korean War. Stalin said that he did not want war with America which would jeopardize all the achievements of the Soviet Union during the past thirty five years.

Dr. Kitchlew was deeply impressed and said later that Stalin was "extremely well informed, seemed to have all the facts at his finger tips, and spoke most frankly."

The same evening, Stalin received the Indian Ambassador, Mr. K.P.S. Menon. The conversation took place mostly on social subjects and the languages spoken in India. It was understood that Stalin did not touch on any political subject with the Indian Ambassador.

Kitchlew left Moscow to tour the Soviet territories of Tashkent and Samarkand. During this tour, Kitchlew was informed of Stalin's sudden death. He returned to Moscow and attended the funeral of the Russian Leader whom he had seen earlier in the week.

After attending Stalin's funeral in Moscow, Kitchlew resumed his tour of Tashkent where he was accorded a tumultuous reception. He gave a statement saying that he had not seen any sign of fatigue or tiredness on Stalin's face during their meeting. He had found Stalin hale and hearty and quite active. There had been rumours among Western observers that Stalin had been assassinated. Kitchlew's statement on the funeral of Stalin gave further suspicions that Stalin was either assassinated or poisoned by the Anti-Stalin group in Moscow. Earlier there had been a doctor's plot.

After staying a couple of days in Tashkent and Samarkand, Saifuddin Kitchlew arrived in Kabul where he met some of the leading Afghan Leaders. He stressed the need for more co-operation and friendly relations between India and Afghanistan.

Kitchlew was eager to visit Pakistan as he had not seen his friends, relations and colleagues there for a number of years. He arrived in Rawalpindi through Kabul and was given a rousing reception by the people including friends, relations and old colleagues. In an interview with the Associated Press, Kitchlew said that the Indian masses had sympathy with the Pakistani masses and suggested all out Indo-Pakistan co-operation.

In Lahore Kitchlew received a similar welcome. His arrival in Lahore was a day of joy and happiness for all his relations, friends, colleagues and political workers and admirers.

In the evening Dr. Khalifa Shujah Uddin, Speaker of the Punjab Assembly, called on Kitchlew and they had a long chat together. It was a moment of great joy for them as they had not seen each other since the non-co-operation movement. The same evening Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif arrived to see Kitchlew in order to discuss their proposed visit to Stockholm.

The next day Kitchlew paid a visit to the High Court of Lahore at the invitation of the Lahore High Court Bar Association. Senior Judges, Barristers and Lawyers attended the reception. Saifuddin Kitchlew impressed on the Judges the need to send a goodwill mission of Judges and Barristers to India in order to create a friendly atmosphere between the two countries, which Kitchlew thought was most essential for the progress of the two great countries.

Kitchlew also had the opportunity to meet his old colleague Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The two Leaders had already worked together during the struggle for freedom. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was then under trial by the West Punjab Government due to his activities for Pakhtoonistan.

The same afternoon, a representative of the U.S. Consulate in Lahore called on Kitchlew and had a lengthy conversation. It appeared that the main object of the U.S. Official was to seek some information about Kitchlew's interview with Stalin. The meeting between Kitchlew and the U.S. Official lasted for almost two hours and later the U.S. Official told the reporters that he had a very frank and friendly chat with Kitchlew and found him a very learned man.

Saifuddin Kitchlew also addressed a press conference. Almost 40 pressmen attended the conference. Kitchlew had a very frank discussion with them and stressed the need for more friendly co-operation between the representatives of the press of the two great countries. In his opinion it could lead the way to further friendly contacts between the masses which he thought was very essential for the progress and prosperity of India and Pakistan.

The Deputy High Commissioner for India in Lahore also called on Kitchlew and delivered a personal message from Prime Minister Nehru.

Kitchlew also received the well known writer and poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Mazhar Ali Khan and Agha Shorish Kashmiri. The same day he addressed the citizens of Lahore and repeated his plea for more co-operation between the masses of the two countries. In his opinion, unity and understanding were most essential for the development of the two countries. Kitchlew also warned the people to be vigilant against any foreign

intervention on their soil.

During Kitchlew's stay in Lahore, I had the opportunity to have some detailed discussion on International subjects and also about Indo-Pakistan relations. It was a great experience for me to achieve some knowledge of the world through this well travelled Leader. I had already met Pakistan's leading political figures such as the Governor General Khawaja Nazimuddin, the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, Sirdar Abdur Rab Nishtar, Nawab Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani, Mian Aminuddin, Malick Firoze Khan Noon, I. I. Chundrigar and Habib Ibrahim Rahimtoola. On my arrival in England I also met the British Premier Mr. Harold Macmillan and His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan.

Mr. Macmillan and I discussed various matters including the Kashmir problem. The British Premier stressed the need for more co-operation between India and Pakistan and expressed his views that the Kashmir problem should be settled through an impartial plebiscite conducted by the United Nations. During the conversation Mr. Macmillan also hinted about some sort of mediation between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

I reported the entire conversation to the late President Ayub Khan. The late President Ayub assured me that he would contact Mr. Macmillan in this connection.

The National Conference of the India China Friendship Association was held (December 11-13, 1953) in Delhi and was addressed by Ting Si Ling, Leader of the Chinese Cultural delegation then touring the Country. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew presided, giving the meeting a strong resemblance to the Peace Movement.

In 1953, on January 5th, Kitchlew claimed that three million signatures had been collected for the Peace Movement.

The third All India Peace Congress was held in Jullunder (Punjab) on September 13th 1952 under the Chairmanship of Saifuddin Kitchlew. The Congress stressed the need for more co-operation among nations to promote peace and goodwill.

The Congress of peoples for Peace was held in Vienna in December 1953 and thirty Indian delegates journeyed to Austria to attend the Conference. The delegation was led by Dr. Kitchlew at the Vienna meeting of the World Peace Council. It was decided to try to broaden the Peace Movement by obtaining the support of non-communist organizations for a massive International Peace gathering.

It was shortly after the Vienna meeting that the Indian Peace Movement was given an unexpected boost by the

decision of the United States Government to extend Military Aid to Pakistan. This American action was widely interpreted in India as unfriendly interference in South Asian Affairs - prejudicing the peaceful settlement of the outstanding problems between India and Pakistan. American aid to Pakistan became the major theme of the Peace Movement.

The importance attached to the Indian Peace Movement by the International Leadership was evident in December 1954 when the All India Congress for Peace and Asian solidarity convened in Madras. In attendance were several foreign delegates, not the least of whom were Jean Laffite, General - Secretary of the World Peace Council and Mrs. D.N. Pritt, wife of the British Lawyer, noted for his defence of the Mau Mau in Kenya.

At the Madras Conference of the All India Peace Congress Dr. Kitchlew was re-elected President. The first important project undertaken after the Madras meeting was the conference of the Asian Countries, held in New Delhi on April 6th 1956. Two hundred and fifty delegates from sixteen Countries participated, including a 39 member delegation from China headed by Kuo Mo Jo.

The fifth Congress of the All India Peace Conference was held in Bangalore under the Chairmanship of Dr. Kitchlew on May 24th 1957. This time the Peace Movement had succeeded in focusing attention on a campaign to stop the testing of nuclear weapons.

By a crowning irony of circumstances, the same C. Rajagopalachari who had refused to allow the first conference at New Delhi in 1951, inaugurated the Bangalore Convention with a speech attacking the Western position on the nuclear issue and called for India's withdrawal from the Commonwealth.

From 1958 to the end of 1959 Kitchlew remained very active in his activities for the All India Peace Council and toured most of the leading Indian cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow and his hometown Amritsar. He addressed large gatherings and stressed the need for peace in the world. During the Suez crisis, Kitchlew warned Great Britain of the dangerous consequences which he thought could lead the whole world into flames.

In 1960, Kitchlew went to Helsinki to attend another Peace Conference of the World Peace Congress. He was accorded a warm reception there. In a speech during an address of welcome Kitchlew spoke fluently for the need of World Co-operation among nations and invited a delegation

from Helsinki to visit India.

In 1961, Saifuddin Kitchlew was invited by the Peace Council of Sweden. Kitchlew paid a brief visit to Stockholm and addressed a number of meetings and suggested full co-operation between the people of India and Sweden. He thought it essential to play a major role in promoting world peace.

In early 1962, Kitchlew was indisposed for some time and he was advised complete rest by doctors. He was supposed to visit Russia for an operation but due to his commitment of the Capital murder cases in Delhi, he was unable to do so.

CHAPTER 14

THE LAST PHASE

Britain's abdication of power in India was not accepted as genuine by at least one-fifth of the world's population. The Soviet Union and its Communist allies did establish diplomatic relations quite early with the Nehru Government (April 1947 in the case of the Soviet Union) but for several years their encyclopaedias and media of mass communication described Gandhi and Nehru as 'running dogs' of imperialism. The Government of India was treated as a 'semi colonial' regime.

It was largely due to Saifuddin Kitchlew's personal diplomacy that this view began to be modified. The trend had become quite evident by 1954, especially through the Peace Movement which now hailed Nehru as the architect of Peace. Kitchlew was a catalyst for a friendship which was to have historic consequences after he was no more.

Dr. Kitchlew visited Russia again and arranged for the Soviet Leaders, Khruschev and Bulganin, to visit India which they did in February 1956. It was an important and historical visit. The two Leaders were greatly impressed by the cordiality of the people of India. In an address of welcome, Prime Minister Nehru praised the two Leaders and expressed the hope for further friendly relations between India and Russia. Khruschev and Bulganin also expressed similar views. Later they went to Kashmir where Mr. Khruschev publicly declared that Kashmir was an integral part of India. This created a great uproar in Pakistan and at the United Nations, as the Kashmir question was still on the active U.N. agenda. Earlier the Soviet delegate at the U.N. used its veto in a debate on Kashmir in India's favour.

Nehru paid a return visit to Russia after the visit of the two Soviet Leaders to India. He received an unprecedented reception in Moscow.

Similarly Saifuddin Kitchlew was greatly instrumental in cementing India's relations with China. Unfortunately the flight of the Dalai Lama to India in March 1959, triggered off a chain of events which undid all that Kitchlew and his friends, including Nehru, had achieved.

The International Peace Movement also suffered grievously because of the Schism between China and the Soviet Union which soon became pronounced.

These were personal blows to Saifuddin Kitchlew. He was a man who had lived all his life on the energy given him by

his idealistic fervour and a simplistic view of life. He was always disgusted by the deceits, compromises and somersaults of 'real politik.'

When the hostilities broke out between India and China on the northern frontiers of India on October 20th 1962, it proved to be the last straw that broke his back. In a statement to the press in Delhi Kitchlew said, "It is a matter of great sorrow that hostilities have broken out between India and China. They must come to the negotiation table together and hammer out a solution to the present situation without further delay."

Saifuddin Kitchlew offered his good offices through the All India Peace Council. He personally appealed to Premier - Chou En Lai to accept a peace summit in order to discuss the grave situation. It was understood that Kitchlew also had a private meeting with Nehru in this connection.

In early 1963, Dr. Kitchlew was ordered rest which unfortunately he did not take. On the morning of October 9th 1963 he had a heart attack. Heart specialists and leading doctors arrived immediately but in vain. The beloved Leader of the oppressed and one of the heroes of the Independence Movement died peacefully at the age of 75.

Earlier his 75th birthday was celebrated in Amritsar and Delhi. A resolution was passed at the Golden Temple, Amritsar, by the Sikh community, praising Kitchlew's meritorious services in the cause of Unity and World peace. In Delhi Kitchlew's birthday was celebrated by the All India Peace Council with great enthusiasm.

Kitchlew had been residing at Aurangzeb Lane in New Delhi for the last few years of his life. In June 1963 the All India Peace Council had arranged a visit of Kitchlew to Moscow where he was supposed to have medical treatment, but unfortunately he became too weak to undertake such a visit. Nehru was the first to be informed of Kitchlew's sudden death. He arrived immediately at the house of Dr. Kitchlew. Nehru stood by Kitchlew's bed-side where his body lay in one of the rooms, and offered condolences to Kitchlew's wife and other members of the family.

Nehru appeared to be very sad and upset over his friend and colleague's death. It reminded Nehru of his Cambridge days together with Kitchlew and their intimate friendship for fifty years. Nehru remarked when he came out of Kitchlew's house, "I have lost a very dear friend who was a brave and steadfast Captain in the struggle for India's freedom." The news of Dr. Kitchlew's death was immediately relayed by the

All India Radio and Radio Moscow. Condolence messages poured into the house from all over the world. The 'Times' of London, The New York Times, The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Mail, The Pakistan Times and the Statesman published prominently reports of Kitchlew's death.

Quite a few messages of condolence were also received by his family from leading figures including President Radha - Krishnan, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Sir Evan Jenkins, Her Majesty - the Queen of England, Sir Francis Mudie, Chairman Mao and Chou-En-Lai.

Prominent politicians, barristers, diplomats and large numbers of citizens attended the funeral of Kitchlew. The body was laid to rest at the Jamia Millia, Delhi, near the grave of another national hero, Dr. Ansari.

CHAPTER 15

THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE

For forty years or more Saifuddin Kitchlew remained the idol of the masses. They literally adored him, with affection and hero worship. From distant towns they came in thousands to hear him, to see him, to have communion with their beloved Leader, champion of the oppressed, symbol of the new India of their vague dreams. Remarkable indeed was the impact of Kitchlew on the crowd. They seemed to transmit waves of energy to him by virtue of their presence and their constantly expressed faith in his selfless Leadership. The larger the audience the more exhilarated he felt. By periodic tours and almost daily speeches before the crowds, large and small, his storehouse of energy was constantly replenished, not depleted. He transmitted his buoyant enthusiasm and irrepressible optimism, which enabled them to press ahead in the long and difficult task of improving their way of life.

Kitchlew was proud, strong willed and imperious. He fitted the image of a Patriarch perfectly, expected obedience and dominated all those about him. Excessively generous, he earned vast sums of money and spent most of it on the people of his beloved country.

All who knew him agreed that he was a formidable and commanding figure in appearance, very much like a Roman Senator, with a remarkable strength of character and a rock-like will. Kitchlew possessed unusual commonsense. He was intensely practical and disdainful of oratorical subtleties. He was not particularly eloquent, but he was lucid, logical, precise, witty and sarcastic, interpersing his remarks with pointed quotations from Persian and Arabic poetry. He was affable among friends and guests, and an entertaining raconteur. He was, according to all who knew him, a complete man, with many side interests and activities.

He was a nationalist, but cosmopolitan; at home in any society and with every race. He was a distinguished Barrister and a powerful advocate, also a man of charm, culture and tolerance. He represented in many respects the highest type of civilization. He was in fact, a grand seigneur. I remember particularly his exquisite courtesy. No wonder he was adored by his family. He was a perfect host and his hospitality was generous and of high order. His home, which was always open, was the mecca of all who enjoyed the good things of life and

who looked to him as a great Lawyer and national Leader.

Kitchlew had the dignified clear cut features and very fair skin of a Kashmiri Muslim of ancient lineage. He was always immaculate in dress of European or Indian Style.

From his family Kitchlew inherited or acquired certain qualities which remained embedded in his personality. Among these were pride in his own achievements, in his family, in his Kashmiri ancestry and in his people; a magnetic charm; and somewhat haughty, imperious attitude to his colleagues.

Kitchlew was favoured with a strikingly handsome appearance. Pictures of him, at the age of twenty as much as at sixty, reveal the slim chiselled features which are characteristic of the Kashmiri Muslim.

The later pictures reveal much more expressive years. Sometimes pensive, sometimes sharp with irritation, at times gay and self satisfied and at other times intent and alight with resolve; the high stubbornness and intellectual curiosity; the wide mouth and sensuous lips which pout unashamedly during moments of ill temper; the soft moulded chin; and the long delicate fingers. His smile was captivating, at times disarming. His face was oval and his profile classic Greek, making Kitchlew one of the most photogenic politicians of the country. His straight back and good posture expressed the vigour and youthfulness for which he was justly famous.

Kitchlew was a most affable and charming man. Indeed, he had the gift rare among statesmen of inspiring genuine regard and affection in persons ranging over the whole spectrum of political opinion, at home and abroad. But an inner quality of aloofness prevented him from reciprocating even with colleagues of long standing.

Kitchlew was full of power and authority and he knew it, and at times he was imperious, issuing commands which had to be obeyed. Whether his audience consisted of one person or a thousand, the charm and magnetism of the man passed to it, and each one had a feeling of communion with the speaker. The feeling had little to do with the mind, though the appeal to the mind was not wholly ignored. But mind and reason definitely had second place. The process of 'spell binding' was not brought about by oratory or the hypnotism of silken phrases. The language was always simple and to the point, and seldom was an unnecessary word used. It was the utter sincerity of the man and personality that gripped; he gave the impression of tremendous inner reserves of power. Perhaps also it was a tradition that had grown up about him which helped in creating a suitable atmosphere. A stranger, ignorant

of this tradition and not in harmony with the surroundings would probably not have been touched by the spell, or at any rate, not to the same extent. And yet one of the most remarkable things about Kitchlew was his capacity to win over, at least to disarm his opponents.

The history of modern India cannot be understood fully without knowing the career of Saifuddin Kitchlew. From his active entry into India's political life in the early twentieth century to the achievement of Indian Independence, his teachings, his activities and his Leadership had profound effects on the course of development in the country. Kitchlew appeared as a Messiah seeking to bring moral regeneration to India and to the troubled world at large. Seen in another light, he seemed a shrewd politician drawing out the latent force of India's thousands, guiding and directing them toward the goal of Indian freedom from British rule.

Kitchlew stood as a social reformer, attempting to free India from the scars of poverty, caste and class antagonism.

Kitchlew was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths; like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes; like a whirlwind that upset many things but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling condition.

Kitchlew did not quarrel with facts. He sought to use them for his own purposes. He accepted the fatalism and passivity of the Indian people, but found for them a new political function. Instead of aggressive struggle, Kitchlew built up a movement in which passivity and endurance were turned into sources of strength and energy.

Kitchlew was the most subtle and experienced of politicians. He was a prophet who, by his personal charm and selflessness, could unlock the door to the hearts of the masses where the moderate bourgeois Leaders could not hope for a hearing.

It is a matter of sorrow for us that the principles in accordance with which Kitchlew endeavoured to mould India and nursed the ambition of moulding the whole world, have not been understood by us.

Kitchlew attempted to win for us individual or social life and national life. We cannot be free as long as we do not give freedom to others. That is why, in a country where people follow different religions, speak different languages,

and belong to different races and castes, it is the duty of each to allow freedom to others to follow their own religion, act on their own line of thought, and speak their own language, and not force anyone to adopt his own. Communal conflicts, even like personal quarrels, arise because of the use of force by one against the other. Kitchlew, therefore, insisted that everyone should look on all religions with equal respect, and that the individuals belonging to them should be accorded equal treatment. And finally he gave up his life for this purpose. Let us search our hearts and ask ourselves: 'Do we really love others?' Are our actions motivated by selfish ends or are we at any rate trying to see that we do not harm others? Are we prepared to do openly whatever it is that we are doing? Have we the World's good at heart or only our own selfish ends? Are we prepared to allow others to follow their own religion, or are we trying secretly or openly to compel them to act in accordance with our own wishes?

We can make our life purposeful only if we look deep into every corner of our hearts to see if there is anything within us which is secretly working against the teachings and principles of Kitchlew.

Kitchlew was a man of moral values like truth and selflessness, political ideals such as freedom, democracy and peace.

These were indivisible parts of his life and teachings. It was this adherence to certain ideals that made him plunge into the Independence Movement in the early part of his public life; it was this again that enabled him to work out his campaign for the freedom of the nation; it was this that made him the champion of innumerable democratic causes and ultimately made him a hero in the noble cause of national freedom.

The growth of nationalism turned Indian people's minds to the necessity for political freedom. Freedom was necessary not only because it was degrading to be dependent and enslaved; not only because as Kitchlew had put it, 'it was our right and we must have it,' but also to lessen the burden of poverty from our people. How was freedom to be attained? Obviously the people were not going to get it by remaining quiet and waiting for it. It was equally clear that methods of mere protests and begging, which the Congress had followed, were not only undignified but were also futile and ineffective. Never in history had such methods succeeded, or induced a ruling or privileged class to part with power. History indeed showed us that peoples and classes who were enslaved had won their freedom through violent rebellion and insurrection.

Armed rebellion seemed out of the question for the Indian people. They were unarmed, and most of them did not know even the use of arms. Besides, in a contest of violence, the organised power of the British Government was far greater than anything that could be raised against it. Armies might mutiny, but unarmed masses could not rebel and face armed forces. Individual terrorism, on the other hand, the killing by bomb or pistol of individual officers was a bankrupt's creed. It was demoralizing for the people and it was ridiculous to think it could shake a powerfully organized government. So all the avenues led nowhere, and there seemed to be no way out of the intolerable conditions of a degrading servitude. People who were at all sensitive felt terribly depressed and helpless.

This was the moment when Kitchlew marched forward and taught the masses to rely on themselves and build up their own strength, and it was obviously a very effective method of bringing pressure on the Government. The Government rested very largely on the co-operation, willing or unwilling, of Indians themselves, and if this co-operation were withdrawn and the boycotts practised, it was quite possible in theory, to bring down the whole structure of Government. It is not surprising therefore, that this method of self-reliance, coupled with the remarkable personality of Kitchlew, caught the imagination of the Country and filled it with hope. It spread, and with its approach the old demoralization vanished.

Kitchlew brought a complete change in the minds of the people of India. He made them united and a mass organization. It is not surprising that this astonishingly vital man, full of confidence and an unusual kind of power, standing for equality and freedom for each individual, fascinated the masses of India and attracted them like a magnet. He seemed to them to link up the past with the future and to make the dismal present appear a stepping stone to that future of life and hope. And not the masses only, but intellectuals, and others also, though their minds were often troubled and confused and the change-over for them from the habits of a life time was more difficult. Thus he effected a vast psychological revolution, not only among those who followed his lead but also among his opponents and those many neutrals who could not make up their minds what to think and what to do. It should be remembered that the nationalist movement was essentially a bourgeois movement. It represented a natural historical stage of development, and to consider it or to criticize it as a working class movement, is wrong.

Kitchlew represented that movement and the Indian

masses in relation to that movement to a supreme degree, and he became the voice of the Indian people to that extent. He functioned inevitably within the orbit of a nationalist ideology, but the dominating passion that consumed him was a desire to raise the masses. In this respect he was always ahead of the nationalist movement.

It is true that Mohammad Ali Jinnah's great role was a highly important contributory factor, but without intense religious fervour and zeal for an Islamic state on the part of Muslim masses, Jinnah could not have achieved Pakistan. Khilafat Leaders like Saifuddin Kitchlew, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and poets like Hali, Akbar Allahabadi, Iqbal and Hasrat Mohani were mainly responsible for making Muslims conscious of their national and cultural identity. Through nationwide action Kitchlew sought to mould the thousands and largely succeeded in doing so and changing them from a demoralized, timid and hopeless lot, bullied and crushed by every dominant interest and incapable of resistance, into a people with self respect and self reliance, resisting tyranny and capable of united action and sacrifice for a larger cause. Kitchlew made them think of political and economic issues and every village and every Bazaar hummed with argument and debate on the new ideas and hopes that filled the people. That was an amazing psychological change. Kitchlew played a revolutionary role in India of the greatest importance because he knew how to make the most of the objective conditions and could reach the heart of the masses. Kitchlew gave a turn to the nationalist movement which lessened the feeling of frustration and bitterness.

Kitchlew was an intense nationalist; he was also, at the same time, a man who felt he had a message not only for India but for the world, and he ardently desired world peace. His nationalism therefore, had a certain world outlook. He belonged to India; he belonged equally to the Indo-Pak Sub Continent and to the world. Now he belongs to the ages.

THE END

APPENDIX I

THE AFTERMATH OF JALLIANWALA

Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar became a national memorial. Today in Amritsar the name of Kitchlew is revered as a great patriot and hero. The Jallianwala Bagh is now a show-place, comparable with the Golden Temple and the Taj-Mahal, which attracts tourists by the thousands. Jallianwala Bagh has been transformed into a memorial garden, the ground having been raised five feet to bring it up to road level. A monument in the shape of a pylon is the centre piece. Surrounding the base of the Pylon is a pool flanked by four big Flames of Liberty. As one enters the Bagh, there is a pergola of open terrace, 60 feet by 100 feet, made of Kotah stone. This was the spot from which General Dyer started firing at the unarmed crowd of 30,000 who had assembled to demand the release of their beloved Leader Kitchlew. There is also a children's bathing pool, lawns and flowers; 350 cypress trees have been planted. On all four sides of the wall in four languages, HINDI, URDU, GURMAKHI and ENGLISH are inscribed the following words, "IN MEMORY OF MARTYRS - . . . .13th APRIL 1919."

All India regard 13th April, 1919, as one of the great days in their country's history - a turning point in the struggle for freedom.

The massacre at Jallianwala Bagh brought an abrupt end to the General's career. The Commander-in-Chief informed Dyer that his services were no longer required. Dyer sailed for England, arriving at Southampton on May 2nd, 1919. He could not dispute the right of the Commander-in-Chief of India to relieve him of his command.

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a calculated piece of inhumanity towards utterly innocent and unarmed men, women and children; it was unparalleled for its ferocity in the history of the British nation.

General Dyer's case came up for a debate in the House of Lords on July 19th and 20th 1919. Several Peers condemned Dyer bitterly. The Marquess of Crewe, a former Secretary of State for War, submitted that Dyer's argument that he had been forced by a rival army with Kitchlew as its Leader was hardly tenable. It was hard to understand, he said, how his 1,200 troops, armed with few guns, could have been swept away. The risk of his troops being mobbed in the Jallianwala Bagh was not great. He went on to point out, "If it be that with an inadequate force you can deal with a crowd by starting

to shoot at it as long as your ammunition holds out, that seems of itself to be condemnation of your going with that particular force to disperse that crowd at all. It is surely a most dangerous argument to use, that because your force is small you may legitimately employ methods which a larger force would not think of employing. To what would that argument lead? Poison gas would disperse a much larger crowd very quickly with a much smaller number of men, but nobody suggests it should be adopted as a means of dealing with unlawful gatherings, however, forcibly, by proclamation or otherwise. You have announced your intention to punish them." Dyer, he suggested, had taken a wrong turning.

The Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Birkenhead, declared that Dyer committed a tragic error. He fired on a mass of humanity. Dyer had said himself that there was no danger of his force being rushed. Dyer personally directed the fire to where the number trying to escape was thickest. They were trying to disperse but Dyer did not give them a chance.

Winston Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons, recalled the Jallianwala Bagh incident in the following words:

"Jallianwala Bagh is an episode which appears to me to be without precedent or parallel in the modern history of the British Empire. It is an extraordinary event, a monstrous event, an event which stands in singular and sinister isolation." Churchill argued that the crowd at the Jallianwala Bagh was not armed, as its Leader, Dr. Kitchlew, had already been arrested, and it did not possess lethal weapons. Churchill continued, "Inflicting great slaughter or massacre on a particular crowd or people with the intention of terrorizing not merely the rest of the crowd, but the whole district . . . . I cannot admit this doctrine in any form. Frightfulness is not a remedy known to the British. I am told that Dyer's action has saved India; I do not believe that. As to Dyer's punishment, there should not only be loss of employment but also a definite disciplinary action."

General Dyer died of a stroke on the 23rd July, 1926. He and his wife had moved to an old house called St. Martins, near the village of Long Ashton outside Bristol. There, till the last month of his life, he was able to hobble around the garden with a stick, though he spent most of his time in a chair. The funeral service at All Saints Church, Long Ashton, was attended by few people, mostly Dyer's relations.

Dyer's principal supporter, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, then Governor of Punjab, survived him by thirteen years. Then on March 13th 1940, he was assassinated by an Indian named Udham Singh at the Caxton Hall, London.

APPENDIX 2

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY DR. ZAKIR HUSSAIN PRESIDENT OF INDIA

Rashtrapati Nilayan,
Bolarum. (Andhra/Pradesh)

September 7th, 1967

Dear Mr. Farooq,

Thank you for your letter of 29th August last. I am glad you have written the life of your grandfather Dr. Saifuddin - Kitchlew.

I had the privilege of knowing your grandfather and associating with him in the early days of Jamia Millia where I worked for quite some time. Dr. Kitchlew was among the founder members of the institute. He devoted his whole life to the disinterested service of his people, during which he displayed a rare loyalty to high ideals in difficult circumstances. I shall look forward very much to reading your book on him.

With all good wishes,
Yours Sincerely,
ZAKIR HUSSAIN.

Farooq Z. Kitchlew, Esq.

MESSAGE FROM MRS. INDIRA GANDHI
PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA.

Prime Minister's House
New Delhi

September 3, 1967

Dear Shri Kitchlew,

I have received your letter of the 23rd August and am glad that you have written a book on Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew's life and work.

Dr. Kitchlew was indeed a brave and steadfast captain in the struggle for freedom. Ever since Jallianwala Bagh days he was in the forefront of the nationalist movement. He was a man of progressive ideas and was held in high regard by friends and colleagues.

With best wishes,
Yours Sincerely,
INDIRA GANDHI.

Shri Farooq Z. Kitchlew.

Message From His Excellency C. Rajagopalachari
Former Governor General Of India.

Madras W.

29th August, 1967

Dear Mr. Farooq Kitchlew,

I was indeed delighted to get a letter from my dear friend Kitchlew's grandson.

Accept my most sincere good wishes for yourself and the book. Kitchlew was a noble and clean minded Indian and I am glad a grandson of his has written a biography of the patriot.

With all Good wishes,
Yours Sincerely,
C. Rajagopalachari.

Farooq Z. Kitchlew, Esq.

Message From Her Majesty The Queen

Buckingham Palace

17th March, 1967

Dear Mr. Kitchlew,

I am commanded by the Queen to write to you.

Her Majesty has noted with interest that you are writing the life of your distinguished grandfather Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew.

The Queen personally desires me to tell you how much Her Majesty appreciated your kind thought, and I am to express to you the Queen's most sincere wishes for you and the book.

Yours Sincerely,
Martin Charteris
Private Secretary

Mr. Farooq Z. Kitchlew

Message From Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret

Kensington Palace
London, W. 8.

19th September, 1967

Dear Mr. Kitchlew,

Princess Margaret has asked me to write to you personally.

Her Royal Highness was most interested to hear that your book on the life of the famous Dr. Kitchlew is soon being published and will look forward to receiving a copy.

With all good wishes,
Yours Sincerely,
Juliet Smith,
Lady In Waiting.

Mr. Farooq Z. Kitchlew.

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